839.7.9

THE FORCE OF CALUMNY.

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

By AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

By ANNE PLUMPTRE,

TRANSLATOR OF KOTZEBUE'S NATURAL SON, AND OTHER PLAYS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR R. PHILLIPS, NO. 71, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

SOLD BY H. D. SYMONDS, AND T. HURST, PATERNOSTER-ROW; CARPENTER AND CO. OLD-BOND-STREET; AND BY ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

[*Price Half-a-Crown.*]

1799.

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

39.
2. 8.
79.

859.

Lately were published, by the same Author and Translator, and may be had of all the Booksellers,

THE NATURAL SON,

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS;

Being the Original of LOVERS' VOWS, now performing at Covent Garden Theatre. *The Sixth Edition.*

THE COUNT OF BURGUNDY,

A PLAY, IN FOUR ACTS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE VIRGIN OF THE SUN,

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.

THE SPANIARDS IN PERU;

OR, THE DEATH OF ROLLA.

The Play which is announced for Performance at Drury-Lane, under the Title of PIZARRO.

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.

Each Price Half-a-Crown.

ALSO,

SELF IMMOLATION;

OR, THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE.

A PLAY, IN THREE ACTS.

TRANSLATED BY MR. NEUMAN.

Price Two Shillings.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SYNDICUS MORLAND.*

EMILIA, *his Wife.*

JENNY, *his Sister.*

EDWARD SMITH, *an Englishman, his Clerk.*

COUNT SCHARFENECK, *Prime Minister to the Prince.*

YOUNG SCHARFENECK, *his Nephew, a Gentleman of the Privy-Chamber.*

PRUNK, *Valet of the Privy-Chamber.*

ALLBRAND, *Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.*

CAPTAIN ELLFIELD, *an old Officer.*

MRS. ELLFIELD, *his Wife.*

BENJAMIN KROLL, *a Gaoler.*

EVE, *his Wife.*

PILZ, *an Officer of the Police.*

THOMAS, *an old Servant to Morland.*

GUARDS.

* *Syndicus,* is the title of an officer in the Law Department in some parts of Germany. *Translator.*

THE

FORCE OF CALUMNY.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Room in* MORLAND'S *Houſe. The Breakfaſt-Table ſet out.*

EMILIA *enters at a ſide-door, and ſpeaks as ſhe enters to ſomebody behind the Scenes.*

EMILIA.

GO to bed, Catharine, I entreat you! (*Coming forwards*) The poor old woman muſt be very cold!—'Tis well that theſe nocturnal walks will ſoon be at an end!—I have indeed promiſed poor Ellfield to ſee him again to-night, and I dare not go alone.—Yet why not?—What need I fear in ſo ſhort a diſtance?—What accident can happen to me?—Well, well, in a few days all will be revealed; Mrs. Ellfield recovers faſt, and by Morland's birth-day I hope will be in perfect health. What pleaſure ſhall I feel in preſenting theſe unfortunate people to him upon that joyful occaſion, and ſaying, "Dear huſband I "have preſerved the lives of a worthy pair by the ſavings "of my frugality; I have reſcued the huſband from want, "the wife from ſickneſs,—accept this offering as a birth-"day tribute!" And muſt the ſtory be diſcloſed?—ah,

I feel that the enjoyment of a good action is annihilated the moment that action becomes known: if another praiſe thee,—there is an end of thy reward; but is thy own heart thy ſole confident,—new tranſport always ariſes from the recollection!—Yet, the heart and the huſband are only one;—Morland, therefore, ſhall know all. Ah, could he foreſee that a ſtill more important diſcovery awaits him!—Thanks to Heaven! I can no longer doubt of the joyful event!—but this happy communication ſhall alſo be deferred till his birth-day.

SCENE II.—*Enter* JENNY.

Jenny. Good-morrow, ſiſter!—of what happy communication were you talking to yourſelf?

Emilia. Gueſs.

Jenny. That you have a fine brood of young goſlings hatched this morning?

Emilia. Sarcaſtic girl!

Jenny. Or have you ſpun up all your flax?

Emilia. Any one who heard you, would ſuppoſe, that my attention was ſolely occupied by geeſe and ſpinning.

Jenny. Your happineſs is ſo great, that you cannot have any more important objects of ſolicitude.

Emilia. Do you ſuppoſe—

Jenny. Can I never hear the ſtory often enough?—Evening after evening do I ſit with you; my brother begins to read, my ſiſter to work; but ſcarcely has the one read half a dozen ſentences, or the other ſet in half a dozen ſtitches, before a dead ſtop is made; and the blank in the narrative filled up with a long parentheſis of careſſes, and "*my dears*, and "*my loves*," till I am tired of the repetition.

Emilia. Do you not recollect, that Gœthe ſays, "to "behold two real lovers, is a ſcene to charm even the "gods."

Jenny. And, do not you recollect, that Muſæus ſays; "It may be a ſcene to delight the gods, but to mortals it is "*ennuyant* in the extreme."

Emilia.

Emilia. I confeſs it is a ſcene, in which one would rather be a performer than a ſpectator.

Jenny. The one ſighs, "Ah, ſiſter I am ſo happy!"—"Brother, I have heard that about a thouſand times."—The other liſps, "Jenny, my happineſs is unbounded!"—"Siſter, I know all your fine rhapſodies by heart."

Emilia. Why do you not ſeek like happineſs?

Jenny. There, again!—dear ſiſter, you know as well I, that a maiden muſt not *ſeek*, ſhe muſt only *find*;—and, good heavens! how rarely can we *find* what we are not permitted to *ſeek!*

Emilia. Whoever would gather a flower, muſt at leaſt ſtretch out a hand.

Jenny. The roſes of love blow only in ſummer,—the thorns of wedlock laſt the whole year round.

Emilia. Does that reflection ariſe from obſervations made in this houſe?

Jenny. Heaven forbid!—No, a perpetual ſpring reigns here, as in Mahomet's paradiſe.

Emilia. And in every place where love is combined with a taſte for domeſtic life.

Jenny. But amid this prating, we have wandered from our text. I wanted to know the ſubject of your communication?

Emilia. Have you never, in the midſt of all our happineſs, heard us name one ſingle ſubject of regret?

Jenny. Of regret?

Emilia. And unite in an ardent wiſh, that heaven would conſecrate our union by a ſtill ſtronger pledge?

Jenny. Moſt poetically expreſſed!—But am I indeed to underſtand that you are likely to become a mother?

Emilia. Undoubtedly!—Yet, be ſilent, dear Jenny!

Jenny. And my brother is ſtill ignorant of this joyful news?

Emilia. I feared to deceive you all by illuſive hopes.

Jenny. (*Knocking at the door of Morland's ſtudy*)—Brother, come hither directly! important tidings await you!—leave your writing!—that may be deferred till another time.

Emilia. Be ſilent, I entreat!—I wiſh the communication to be reſerved for his birth-day.

Jenny. Can joy be too ſoon imparted? (*She opens Morland's door*) Henry, will you not come?

Emilia. Dear Jenny!

SCENE

SCENE III.—*Enter* MORLAND.

Morland. Well, here I am!—Good-morrow, deareſt Emilia!—and now, Jenny, what's the matter?

Jenny. The matter!—only that I am afraid poor Pompey is likely ſoon to be wholly ſuperſeded in your favour.

Morland. Truly, an important ſubject, on which to call me from my writing. But whence this fear?

Jenny. Becauſe we ſeldom laviſh our affection upon brute animals, but from the want of more intereſting objects.—Have you not often made this remark yourſelf?

Morland. What?—how!—Jenny!—Emilia!—Come, come, this is too ſerious a ſubject for trifling! (*He looks alternately at his wife and ſiſter*) Emilia, may I believe it?

Emilia. Yes, deareſt Morland.

Morland. (*After claſping her in his arms for awhile in ſilent extaſy*) God! I thank thee that thou haſt liſtened to my moſt ardent wiſh!

Emilia. I meant this to have remained a ſecret till your birth-day; but that prattler——

Morland. Oh, Jenny, how will this news rejoice our father!

Jenny. To-morrow is poſt-day; I will write to him.

Morland. Then will the good old man drop a tear into the lake of Geneva.

Jenny. Or haſten to the grave of our mother, where he will feel this tranſport moſt deeply.

Morland. It is a long time ſince I wrote to him,—beg him to excuſe me!—You know that my buſineſs—

Jenny. I make excuſes for you!—by no means!—that you have, for a long time, ſat in your ſtudy whole days together, and lately even ſlept there, that you might be up earlier in the morning to renew your labours, I well know;—But what you are about——

Morland. You cannot tell.

Jenny. Even ſo!—Often, when we have queſtioned you upon this ſubject, you have anſwered with the air of

an

an ancient Roman; "My dear girls, the welfare of the "whole ſtate reſts upon my ſhoulders!"—Well, then, haſten to complete the important taſk in which you are engaged, that you may be reſtored to our ſociety.

Morland. To accompliſh that reſtoration, I muſt ſtill work. Never was it more neceſſary to take example from the watchful crane, whoſe figure crowns the arms over our city gates. On one ſide, too much is required, on the other too much refuſed!—The prince is diſtruſtful, the people preſuming, and neither party can enjoy a moment's repoſe.

Jenny. But with us, God be thanked, all is quiet!—Ætna ſends forth torrents of fire—the earth trembles—and we calmly read the dread tidings in the news-papers.

Morland. When the earth ſhakes in Sicily, a new iſland is ſometimes thrown up in the ſea of Iceland. Heaven be praiſed! we are quiet at preſent, and my nightly watchings will, I hope, contribute towards increaſing our ſecurity. It is no light taſk, to ſearch the archives of a town for a ſucceſſion of ſix centuries, to ſeparate rights from cuſtoms, and claims from laws, and then to compreſs the reſult into ſuch a form that the prince may know enough, without the people knowing too much.

Emilia. Will not your taſk be ſoon finiſhed?—We have enjoyed ſo little of your company for a month paſt—

Morland. This very day, I ſhall tranſcribe the laſt ſheet.

Jenny. Away, then!—write hard, and do not let us ſee you any more till you can throw aſide that countenance of thought.

Morland. This happy news has ſo diſtracted my attention, that I know not, whether I ſhall be able any longer to form a letter.

Jenny. Or at every word you write, ſome apoſtrophe to the future heir of your family will be intruding itſelf, and whenever the letter P occurs, "*he ſays Papa*," will be ready to follow.

Morland. Give as free ſcope to your wit as you pleaſe, my good ſiſter; but unleſs I am much miſtaken, the aunt feels no ſmall degree of happineſs.

Jenny. She does not deny the charge.

Morland. Well, go to breakfaſt, my dears—I will be with you preſently. (*Exit into his ſtudy.*)

SCENE IV. EMILIA *and* JENNY.

Emilia. What an excellent man!

Jenny. Not one of the worſt of human beings, indeed!—a true honeſt Swiſs!—his anceſtors fought at Morgarten.

Emilia. How happy is it for me, that I obeyed the dictates of my reaſon, inſtead of yielding to the ambitious views of my aunt, with her numerous line of anceſtors?

Jenny. 'Tis happy, indeed, ſince all has fallen out ſo well! yet I muſt own, dear ſiſter, that I was ſtrongly averſe to this match; as it did not, in my opinion, wear an auſpicious aſpect.

Emilia. Had you fully known the principles that decided my reſolution—

Jenny. I had earneſtly wiſhed the union!—I had ſhewn that I was not inſenſible to the value of a woman whoſe innocence was ſo lightly eſtimated by a baſe aunt, yet who had virtue enough to prefer becoming the wife of a worthy citizen, to being the miſtreſs of a prince.

Emilia. Silence!—not ſo loud!

Jenny. But then, indeed, my expectations would have been raiſed to ſuch a pitch, that I ſhould not, as now, have ſeen you, for two years ſoaring ſo far above them.

Emilia. This teſtimony, deareſt ſiſter, is my pride, and my joy; and, believe me, I would, this day, do from enthuſiaſtic affection, what was then only the reſult of reaſon.

Jenny. Singular enough, for a woman to fall in love with her own huſband.

Emilia. Not *ſingular* ſurely;—and is it not far better than to idolize the lover at the expence of the huſband? I would ſeriouſly adviſe you, Jenny, to follow my example, not to wait for the witchery of love, but to be content with reaſon, and friendſhip.

Jenny. Again caſting a reflection upon my reſpectable ſpinſter ſtate? any one would ſuppoſe me as much ſurrounded with ſuitors, as formerly the rich princeſs of Burgundy.

Emilia.

Emilia. There is the gentleman of the Privy-Chamber——

Jenny. A ſpring zephyr that plays with every flower,—a blighting inſect that deſtroys every leaf he comes near. His tongue levels with the duſt every reſpectable name, as the ſcythe mows down every blade of graſs. I lately, however, very coolly, and drily, told him ſuch plain truths, that his hopes muſt now be entirely at an end.

Emilia. I know not whether you may have obſerved the new enemy that ſeems advancing to the ſiege from another quarter.

Jenny. As how?

Emilia. That our clerk——

Jenny. The Engliſhman?—you dream!

Emilia. Women are ſeldom miſtaken in ſuch conjectures.

Jenny. A true Engliſh caprice!—and moreover—

Emilia. I know what you would ſay—a clerk—

Jenny. Not ſo. A clerk wears a coat, to the button-hole of which chance may, ſome time or other, faſten an Order.—But—

Emilia. He has a good underſtanding, well cultivated—

Jenny. But, nothing wherewith to make the pot boil.

Emilia. I am not ſo certain of that—I ſuſpect him to be richer than he appears.

Jenny. Why ſo?

Emilia. Do not laugh,—and I will tell you a truly feminine obſervation I have made. He wears very fine linen.

Jenny. To which I can add another equally curious.—Not long ſince a man came to this town, who gives himſelf out as an Engliſh maſter of languages. Smith calls him his friend and fellow-countryman. But I, one day ſaw them together upon the ſtairs, when Smith had his hat on, and the other, with his in his hand, was bowing to him very reſpectfully. This ſtruck me, and I ſtopped to obſerve them; but they immediately perceived me, appeared embarraſſed, and the tone of equality was inſtantly reſumed, though evidently with ſome degree of reſtraint; ſoon after which they ſhook hands and parted.

Emilia. What if this clerk ſhould be a prince in diſguiſe?

Jenny.

Jenny. An Arcadian ſhepherd come to aſſiſt me in tending my flocks?

Emilia. He is certainly no ordinary man.

Jenny. So my brother ſays.

SCENE V.—*Enter* THOMAS.

Thomas. Secretary Allbrand to wait upon you, Madam.

Jenny. The odious wretch! I will not ſee him. *(She runs out through a ſide door)*

Emilia. Alas! muſt I be obliged to receive him?—Shew him up, Thomas. *(Exit Thomas)* Oh God! how often in this world are we compelled to ſtoop to diſſimulation!

SCENE VI.—*Enter* ALLBRAND.

Allbrand. Pardon, Madam, my troubling you thus early.

Emilia. You are my huſband's friend.—A friend cannot come unſeaſonably.

Allbrand. Would to Heaven that this were ſpoken as from yourſelf!

Emilia. Morland is not yet at leiſure; will you condeſcend to loſe a few minutes with a female?

Allbrand. You are ſportive, Madam. You know but too well what a gain I conſider this loſs.

Emilia. Poſſibly, your buſineſs may be urgent?—I will call my huſband.

Allbrand. Urgent!—Ah, Madam, I have no buſineſs ſo urgent as to tell you, that in your preſence every thing elſe is forgotten.

Emilia. The air of the court has infected you.

Allbrand. It has only emboldened me to declare my feelings.

Emilia. *(Embarraſſed, and endeavouring to turn the converſation*

converſation) I underſtand that a new play is to come out at the theatre this evening.

Allbrand. At which I would indulge a hope that you may be preſent.

Emilia. 'Tis poſſible.

Allbrand. Then I may look forward to ſpending ſome hours of tranſport.

Emilia. Of that you can ſcarcely fail, ſince the piece is Schrœder's.

Allbrand. The theatre is the only place where I may be allowed to contemplate thoſe charms, without offending your rigid notions. There, leaning againſt a pillar, alone in the midſt of a ſurrounding croud, my eyes remain immovably fixed upon your box;—you ſee me not, while I ſee only you;—ſometimes, indeed, your fan or muff alone are to be ſeen; but even to behold them is ſoothing to me.

Emilia. Secretary Allbrand, you forget your engagement. Solely on the condition, that in future I ſhould hear no more ſuch language, did I conſent to conceal from my huſband, whom you call your friend, a paſſion, which to view it in the moſt favourable light, is the height of imprudence.

Allbrand. Could a mind like yours harbour the idea of ſowing the ſeeds of diſcord between two friends, who ſo long ſince, even as youths at the univerſity, ſwore eternal fidelity to each other?

Emilia. Have you obſerved your oath?

Allbrand. Can it be perjury towards friendſhip, to admire what my friend has found ſo lovely?—to adore the being who makes him happy?

Emilia. Think as you pleaſe, in ſilence; but never forget that the wife of Morland can admit only your friendſhip and eſteem; but will ſteadily reject all pretenſions to your admiration or love.

Allbrand. Happy Morland!—yet at leaſt permit me to complain of the injuſtice of fate; that I, who have never loved but once in my life, whoſe conſtancy might be entitled to ſome recompence, am compelled in ſilence to cheriſh a hopeleſs paſſion, while he, who, for years, only roved from flower to flower, is repaid by an ardour and ſteadineſs of attachment which ſuch levity ill-deſerves;—that I, to whom innocence was ever ſacred, am now ſcorned, rejected, while he, who at Straſburgh——

Emilia. No more!—I will not hear you!

Allbrand. Far be from me, the malignant wiſh to derogate from the merits of my worthy friend!—particularly, to injure him in the eſteem of one in whom his whole happineſs is centered!—If at the time I reproved him ſeverely for deceiving an innocent girl with falſe promiſes——

Emilia. 'Tis falſe!—Morland never deceived any one!—

Allbrand. I do not mention this lapſe, as a thing wholly unpardonable.—He was young,—a perfect Adonis among the women,—was it ſurpriſing that ſuch admiration ſhould make him vain? and we all know to what lengths vanity will lead a man;—perhaps the want of opportunity alone, protected me from doing the like.—But, what excites my indignation, is, that partial fate ſhould give him a reward due only to the purity of a firſt paſſion.

Emilia. Secretary Allbrand, even if this ſtory, in the diſcloſure of which you ſeem to find ſo much gratification, were true,—why relate it to me?—how does it concern me?—what purpoſe do you hope to make it anſwer to yourſelf?—For two years, I have been united to Morland; he has ſtudied inceſſantly to promote my happineſs; I have no wiſh unſatisfied; and what paſſed prior to our union, is indifferent to me;—if my huſband was once wild, I eſteem myſelf the more fortunate that ſuch courſes are now entirely abandoned by him. Above all things, I deteſt the malignity that would trace back the life of a man even to his cradle, to enumerate how many times in his childhood his mother was conſtrained to uſe the rod. In ſhort, Sir, I will hear no more!—To preſerve domeſtic harmony, and ſpare my huſband ſome hours of painful chagrin, I have hitherto been ſilent; but be aſſured, the next time that a ſimilar expreſſion ſhall eſcape your lips, all ſhall be revealed, whatever may be the conſequence.

Allbrand. If you ſuppoſe that an unhappy paſſion is to be repreſſed by menaces, you know little of the human heart.

Emilia. To deal with you ſincerely, Mr. Secretary, I conſider you as ready to grant any paſſion free ingreſs into your heart; but I believe none will ever gain a permanent eſtabliſhment there.

Allbrand. I know not in what way to anſwer ſuch a compliment.

Emilia.

Emilia. Do with my compliment, as I have always done with your's—given them to the wind.

Allbrand. (*With ſuppreſſed irritation*) Madam—

SCENE VII.—*Enter* MORLAND.

Morland. (*As he enters*) I heard right, then!—I thought I recognized your voice; (*he gives him his hand*) whether upon buſineſs, or as a friend, moſt welcome!

Allbrand. I come in both relations.

Emilia. I will not interrupt you, gentlemen. (*Exit*)

Morland. Sit down, my friend!—Have you breakfaſted?

Allbrand. Two hours ago.

Morland. I waited till I had finiſhed my buſineſs—I thought that breakfaſt would then have a better reliſh.—Has the miniſter aſked——

Allbrand. I came hither upon that account. He expects to ſee you to-day.

Morland. He ſhall not be diſappointed.

Allbrand. The abſtract———

Morland. Is ready; and I have ſucceeded in it beyond my hopes. I have endeavoured to be as clear, as a work of ſuch important public utility demands.

Allbrand. The miniſter expects implicit ſubmiſſion.

Morland. Say rather temperate truths; and then his expectations will not be deceived.

Allbrand. Indeed, in taking ſuch ground, you will oppoſe many courtly ideas. But, ſo much the better;—only be upon your guard; and ſhould he, in conſequence, receive you with a haughty coldneſs, do not ſhew any reſentment.

Morland. I never ſwerve from the ſtrict line of my duty.

Allbrand. He is no friend to the rights of citizens.

Morland. They are clearly defined.

Allbrand. Yet I fear, that a deciſion——

Morland. Who can withſtand power?

Allbrand. But, I know the mind of a courtier;—only oppoſe manly ſteadineſs to his *ipſe dixit.*

Morland. I ſay no more than may be ſaid with propriety

by a ſubject, and what I am bound to ſay as advocate for the citizens.

Allbrand. *(With a ſecret malicious joy)* So much the better!—But indeed the miniſter has very contracted ideas of what a man ought to ſay.

Morland. The citizens have not repoſed their confidence in me, that I ſhould faſhion my ideas after thoſe of the miniſter.

Allbrand. There I recognize the true Swiſs manlineſs.

Morland. Honeſty is at home every where.

Allbrand. *(Rubbing his hands)* I am delighted with the idea of this audience.

Morland. I cannot ſay that I feel any delight; but I go to it, with perfect compoſure. The miniſter would have a hard taſk indeed to ruffle my temper to-day; for I am ſo tuned to happineſs!—Dear Allbrand, participate my tranſports;—I am likely to become a father.

Allbrand. *(Starting)* Indeed!

Morland. What, for two years, I have ardently wiſhed, but had almoſt ceaſed to hope, is at length granted me. God be thanked for ſo great a bleſſing!

Allbrand. *(In a conſtrained manner)* You give me a moſt unexpected pleaſure!—Believe me, I take the warmeſt intereſt—

Morland. Without many words — friendſhip is not wordy.

Allbrand. It is but right, that Emilia ſhould pay you in one way what ſhe deprives you of in another.

Morland. What ſhe deprives me of?—I do not underſtand you.

Allbrand. I mean that you are an object of hatred to the courtiers. You know the old Latin ſaying, "*regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.*"

Morland. Becauſe ſhe gave her hand to a citizen.

Allbrand. Not ſo.—That was the ſubject of their ſneers and ſarcaſms for three days; and then was wholly forgotten.

Morland. What then?

Allbrand. My God!—you know very well—

Morland. What do I know?

Allbrand. The Prince is young, and vain;—he will never pardon you for having ſuperſeded him.

Morland.

Morland. The Prince?

Allbrand. Why that queſtion?—as if I told you ſomething new.

Morland. New indeed!

Allbrand. You cannot be ignorant, that the Prince was formerly a ſuitor of Emilia's.

Morland. The Prince a ſuitor of Emilia's?—What am I to underſtand by this inſinuation?

Allbrand. What is commonly underſtood, when we talk of a Prince's being a ſuitor.

Morland. Allbrand, I conſider this as an affront.

Allbrand. Good God! how can you conſider it as an affront, to hear from the mouth of a friend, what has long ſerved as an amuſement for all the goſſips in town.

Morland. That the Prince had made propoſals to Emilia?

Allbrand. Very brilliant propoſals, and very urgently offered.

Morland. And Emilia?——

Allbrand. Did what honour and virtue required of her.

Morland. She never mentioned a word of this to me!

Allbrand. I am aſtoniſhed at that.

Morland. It was known to all the goſſips in town, yet was to be concealed from me!

Allbrand. Doubtleſs, to avoid giving you uneaſineſs.

Morland. I am made more uneaſy by hearing it thus.

Allbrand. I am not ſurprized at that, and, viewed in this light, Emilia certainly has been wrong in the ſecrecy ſhe has obſerved. She ought to have told you the ſtory herſelf, leſt it might perchance reach your ears from ſome other quarter, when it would be ſerved up, adorned with all the pretty circumſtances, with which rumour delights to garniſh ſuch diſhes.

Morland. And are ſuch ſtories indeed whiſpered about?—Such ſtories of my wife?

Allbrand. Heavens! can you be aſtoniſhed at that?—You know the world, know how much it is the aim of every ſcoundrel to run down all merit.

Morland. But, the particulars of this hiſtory?—

Allbrand. Why would you——

Morland. I require them as an act of friendſhip.

Allbrand,

Allbrand. Then, I muſt obey. It is ſaid that your wife—but, pray, excuſe me!

Morland. No, no!—ſay on!—they will make no kind of impreſſion upon me.

Allbrand. It is ſaid, that your wife and the Prince were once upon very good terms—extremely good terms.

Morland. What mean you?

Allbrand. It is no wonder if the Prince's fine perſon and amiable qualities ſhould, at the firſt moment, dazzle the imagination of a young girl; but the reſt, I have no doubt, are malicious additions.

Morland. Moſt certainly!—yet that people ſhould dare to ſay ſuch things of Morland's wife———

Allbrand. The affair is very little talked of, now.

Morland. But ſtill ſometimes hinted at?

Allbrand. Muſt I remind a man who knows the world ſo well, that a good action is often forgotten in twenty four hours, while a tale of calumny is ſcarcely ever wholly laid aſleep, even when its victim reſts in the grave.

Morland. In truth, my friend, you have found the means of embittering the happieſt hour of my life.

Allbrand. For ſhame!—Why do you ſuffer ſuch a fooliſh buſineſs to torment you?—follow my example, and laugh at the tale. It was but yeſterday that I abſolutely laughed in the face of an old lady, who poſitively aſſerted that the intercourſe between the Prince and Mrs. Morland ſtill continued.

Morland. Still continued!

Allbrand. Had been maintained without intermiſſion for four years.—As if a Prince's love could laſt out an Olympiad!—Ha! ha! ha!

Morland. Mere malice!

Allbrand. Neither more nor leſs.

Morland. Pitiful envy!

Allbrand. And no reaſonable man, therefore, would gratify the babblers by ſuffering the affair to give him the leaſt uneaſineſs.

Morland. Yet I muſt own myſelf hurt at Emilia's never mentioning the ſubject.

Allbrand. It aſtoniſhes me. But the more virtuous the woman, the leſs does ſhe like talking of ſuch conqueſts.

Morland. She had doubtleſs ſufficient reaſons for her ſilence.

Allbrand. Emilia could not act but upon ſufficient reaſons.—But, it grows late—*(He riſes)* Farewel, my friend —we ſhall meet again at the miniſter's.

Morland. *(Riſing)* That four years ago the Prince had intentions?—You know this for certain?

Allbrand. I cannot ſay, that I was ever preſent at an interview;—I only give you common report.

Morland. At an interview!

Allbrand. And if ſhe did ſtray a few ſteps out of the right path; why concern yourſelf with an affair that happened two years before the commencement of your acquaintance with her. In a very few weeks the error was ſeen and relinquiſhed — and, — ah Morland!—were the women to come to ſo ſtrict a reckoning with us, what huſband would dare to look a wife in the face? *(Exit.)*

SCENE VIII.—MORLAND *alone.*

Strange!—what hateful ideas are floating in my brain? —But it cannot be true!—and were it ſo; is Emilia to be condemned becauſe ſhe is lovely and amiable?—She is certainly guiltleſs!—She muſt be, by heaven!—Yet, ſhe ſhould have imparted the circumſtance to me!—her concealment of it was not right!—

SCENE IX.—*Enter* SMITH.

Smith. *(Giving Morland a paper)* Sir, here is the copy.

Morland. What copy?—Oh, I recollect!—You have finiſhed it moſt expeditiouſly.—But, I forgot to tell you, that, ſomewhere in the paper, an erroneous quotation from Monteſquieu, has crept in, which ſhould be corrected.

Smith. I perceived, and have corrected it.

Morland. Indeed!

Smith. Perhaps I have been guilty of impertinence?

Morland

Morland. On the contrary, you have conferred an obligation.—You are, then, acquainted with Monteſquieu's works?

Smith. He is one of my favourite authors.

Morland. It ſeems very extraordinary, that a man ſo accompliſhed as yourſelf, poſſeſſing not only a perfect knowledge of your own language, but alſo of the French and German, and to whom many other branches of learning are familiar, ſhould be condemned to ſo low a ſituation as that of a clerk.

Smith. (*Shrugging his ſhoulders*) Fate—

Morland. Excuſe me, if I cannot help ſaying that I have frequently ſuſpected your birth to be above your preſent circumſtances.

Smith. Are you ſatisfied with my ſervices?

Morland. Perfectly ſo.

Smith. Then, why concern yourſelf with my origin?

Morland. If you are following your own caprice, it is matter of indifference to me?—but ſhould misfortune be the cauſe of your degradation, were I made the confidant of your troubles, I might be enabled to procure you ſome amendment in your ſituation.

Smith. Have none but the unfortunate, need of confidents?—I am not unhappy, yet I might be much happier.

Morland. Can I aſſiſt you?

Smith. Will you?

Morland. With the trueſt pleaſure.

Smith. Your hand upon it? (*Morland gives him his hand*) Have I obtained your good opinion?

Morland. Entirely;—nor will ever loſe it again, if you always remain what you have been for the laſt two months.

Smith. I am always the ſame.

Morland. I conſider you as a man of abilities and integrity.

Smith. I know that I am honeſt.

Morland. I could wiſh you to think the ſame of me.

Smith. Your wiſhes are gratified.

Morland. Then, ſpeak without reſerve.

Smith. I will.—I love your ſiſter.

Morland.

Morland. *(Starting back)* Indeed!—This was not what I expected to hear.

Smith. And what you are not pleaſed at hearing?

Morland. Why do you ſuppoſe ſo?—if—

Smith. Let it remain between ourſelves alone.

Morland. Rely upon that—but there are circumſtances—

Smith. I am rich.

Morland. That is in your favour.

Smith. Not much.—I am a Lord alſo; but, that is of ſtill leſs account.

Morland. How?—explain this romance?

Smith. Does what I ſay, appear like romance?

Morland. What is your name?

Smith. Sidney.

Morland. And you have aſſumed this extraordinary diſguiſe?

Smith. For your ſiſter's ſake.

Morland. But—

Smith. To ſpeak in plain terms;—for as you could not poſſibly unravel this ænigma, yourſelf; I muſt, for once, allow myſelf to ſay more than I uſually do. In my early years, I was a courtier, but the court is not my element: Fortunately for me I became acquainted with John Howard, who taught me to be a man. Peace to his aſhes!—many an infirmary, many a priſon have we examined together; and by this intercourſe, my mind was gradually ſtrengthened and enlightened. When he quitted England for the laudable purpoſe of extending his benevolence to the whole race of mankind, I attached myſelf to his company. With him I have explored the interior of Africa, and viſited Abyſſinia, though not, like Bruce, drunk to the health of a prince whoſe dominions lay ſomewhere about the ſource of the Nile. My concern was rather with the ſources of good and ill in the heart of man—the ſources whence might flow happineſs in life, and compoſure in death;—theſe I ardently wiſhed to diſcover.

Morland. And have you ſucceeded?

Smith. Thus much I have aſcertained.—That under the palm-tree of Negroland, as under the oak of Germany, domeſtic peace and domeſtic comforts, are, if not the only, at leaſt the prime ſources, of mortal happineſs.

Morland. (*Smiling*) And were you obliged to explore the interior of Africa to aſcertain that?

Smith. What lies directly before our eyes, is often ſought at the greateſt diſtance. Every ſpreading tree that we behold, invites us to enjoy peace and ſerenity beneath its ſhade; but we paſs it by, and only hope to taſte repoſe beyond the grave.

Morland. And the experience you have collected in your travels, you wiſh to reduce into practice?

Smith. You are right. This has long been my wiſh, and at length I hope the object is attainable. For four years paſt, I have been in ſearch of a good wife.

Morland. So long, and not yet found one?—your reſearches muſt have been conducted very negligently;—many good wives are to be found.

Smith. 'Tis poſſible;—but I have ſeen ſo much of the world, that I am become ſuſpicious—this is the worſt effect of experience. My feelings are like thoſe of a connoiſſeur in painting, who, amid a magnificent groupe of figures, ſhould paſs over the moſt prominent with contempt, and gaze with delight and aſtoniſhment at one, which to the eyes of common obſervers, appeared loſt in the ſuperior grandeur of the reſt. Believe me, Mr. Morland, it is a true, but melancholy obſervation, that our ſenſibilities to the joys of life, evaporate as the tranſient dew-drops upon the roſe.

Morland. Then, a prudent man ſhould endeavour the more ardently to cheriſh them, while a laſt fleeting drop ſtill remains.

Smith. Such is my determination. My pilgrimage is at an end; I am arrived at my goal.—Jenny has won my whole ſoul, ſhe is the ſingle drop I wiſh to cheriſh. Her form is lovely—her mind far ſuperior—her underſtanding is cultivated, while her heart remains true to nature;—She is charitable and benevolent, without knowing it—witty, without intending it. She never concerns herſelf with the affairs of others, nor ſcans the faſhion of her neighbour's new gown or cap, to turn them into ridicule. She endeavours to exculpate all who are guilty only of weakneſſes, and never condemns in ſevere terms even the moſt palpable criminality. Above all things, ſhe poſſeſſes that richeſt of all treaſures, an equanimity of temper which is the ſame

yeſterday, to-day, to-morrow, and forever. Oh! what an infinite ſource of happineſs is included in that one quality!

Morland. (*Smiling*) How came you ſo intimately acquainted with this phœnix?

Smith. Firſt at the theatre.

Morland. I did not know, that you had ever accompanied her into our box.

Smith. I was not in your box—I was in the pit.

Morland. An opera-glaſs acquaintance then?

Smith. Nor can there be a better medium for forming an acquaintance; provided the mind will uſe it,—not merely the eye. I will venture to aſſert, that a tolerably accurate opinion may always be formed of a woman, only by attentively obſerving her behaviour at the theatre.

Morland. Truly viſionary.

Smith. I mean, ſuppoſing the piece to be ſuch as affords ſufficient ground for obſervation. For inſtance, if a woman be looking around at the company, when Philip is engaged in converſation with Poſa, I can immediately meaſure the extent of her underſtanding. If at the lamentations of the mother in Iffland's Jäger, or at the ſtory of Juſt's ſpaniel,—a woman's eyes remain dry; it gives me an immediate inſight into her heart.

Morland. And Jenny was accidentally ſo fortunate—

Smith. Accidentally!—Jenny, was ſtill Jenny. She never came to ſee and be ſeen, but always ſat in the corner of her box abſorbed in attention to the piece. Her ſmiles and tears were not oſtentatiouſly diſplayed, but loſt in her muff;—ſhe never clapped, but appeared uneaſy when any fine paſſage was interrupted by the clapping of others. This made me obſervant—I continued my obſervations for ſome months—I found that theſe were not the mere impulſes of the moment, but the ſettled feelings of her heart; and I reſolved to become acquainted with her. Where, and in what manner to procure an introduction to this fair incognita, then became the queſtion?—Should I ſeek to dazzle the imagination of my future wife with the proſpect of rank and fortune?—No! never! never!—If the humble Edward Smith could not win her affections; I reſolved that her hand ſhould never be given to the rich Lord Sidney. I heard that you were in want of a clerk; I

offered my ſervices,—my plan ſucceeded—they were accepted. Under this diſguiſe I have for two months ſecretly watched every thought, every action, of the beloved object—I have obſerved her, under circumſtances when even the ſlighteſt veil that conceals the feelings of the ſoul, is thrown aſide; and my reaſon is now ſatisfied;—it has permitted my heart to ſpeak.

Morland. Does my ſiſter know this?

Smith. Heaven forbid!—You are her brother, a man of ſenſe and diſcernment, and ſtand in the place of her father—have you any thing to ſay againſt it?

Morland. My lord, how can I—

Smith. Pſhaw!—Has a ſingle word eſcaped me that might be ſuppoſed to come from the mouth of a lord?—To go farther, I will alſo own, that I have no leſs accurately obſerved you—I am convinced you are an honeſt man;—I as little throw away my friendſhip lightly, as my love. Will you be my friend?

Morland. With my whole heart!

Smith. Enough!—Give me your hand!—no more at preſent, and let what has paſſed, remain a profound ſecret.

Morland. But I cannot poſſibly retain you any longer as my clerk.

Smith. I requeſt it as a favour.

Morland. The women will obſerve my embarraſſment.

Smith. Why ſhould you be embarraſſed?

Morland. Jenny is a nice obſerver.

Smith. Moſt certainly.

Morland. And a man-hater.

Smith. I rejoice to hear it. A reconciled enemy is always the warmeſt friend.

Morland. When will you declare yourſelf?

Smith. I know not.—When courage and opportunity ſuit.

Morland. A man who has traverſed Abyſſinia cannot want courage.

Smith. A fool alone has courage in love—the Abyſſinians have as little courage in this reſpect as ourſelves. Have you farther employment for me?

Morland. I muſt go now to the Miniſter.

Smith. In the afternoon, I will bring you documents to prove my rank and fortune.

Morland.

Morland. I can truſt you.

Smith. That would be folly. I may be an adventurer, and deceive you through impudence—never truſt any one. (*Exit.*)

SCENE X.—MORLAND *alone. He makes a long pauſe, looking after* SMITH.

Never truſt any one!—not even a wife!—Alas! is this all that can be learnt by travelling the world over—that no man is to be truſted!—better be ſometimes deceived, than live in conſtant ſuſpicion!—I cannot do that—my heart revolts againſt it!—Emilia, it is well that the Briton has ſomewhat diſſipated my thoughts!—yet they will recur to one fatal ſubject—Oh Allbrand! Allbrand! thou haſt placed a worm in my boſom which gnaws my very vitals!—Shall I, without reſerve, impart all my torments to Emilia?—that perhaps were beſt!—A huſband or wife cannot guard too cautiouſly againſt ſuffering aught to ſmother within their boſoms, that may at laſt burſt forth into an unquenchable flame. Yet, to-day, I never can aſſume ſufficient fortitude to mention the ſubject—at leaſt not now—in the evening, perhaps, when all buſineſs is over, and the twilight of domeſtic peace may ſucceed a day of ſtorms—

SCENE XI.—*Enter* EMILIA.

Emilia. (*Throwing her arm affectionately round him*) Are you at laſt alone, deareſt Morland?

Morland. (*Withdrawing himſelf from her in confuſion*) Yes,—I am alone—and—I wiſh to be alone!—(*Exit into his ſtudy*)

Emilia. (*Overpowered with aſtoniſhment*) What can this mean!—(*She ſtands fixed in thought*) My God! what can this mean!!!

(*The Curtain falls.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Miniſter's Audience Chamber.* YOUNG SCHARFENECK *Sitting and Playing careleſsly with his Snuff-Box, Ring, and Watch-Chain.* PRUNK *ſtanding by him.* CAPTAIN ELLFIELD *leaning againſt a Pillar at a little Diſtance.*

SCHARFENECK *(Yawning.)*

FOR God's ſake, talk, Prunk.

Prunk. What can I ſay?

Scharfeneck. Any thing.

Prunk. His Excellency has an aſſembly and card-party, this evening.

Scharfeneck. I know that already.

Prunk. His Excellency does not dine at home to-day.

Scharfeneck. I know that too.

Prunk. I don't know what to ſay, then,—you know every thing, beforehand.—To-day is Monday.

Scharfeneck. Ha! ha! ha!—Prunk, can you gueſs why I laugh?—'Tis becauſe you really at laſt have told me news; for the devil fetch me, if ever I know either the day of the week, or the day of the month.

Prunk. Except you ſhould chance to write a draft.

Scharfeneck. Bravo!—well ſaid, Prunk!—you come on—the idea was not bad.—Come, again—

Prunk. I am quite exhauſted.

Scharfeneck. What?—ſerved ſo long in the anti-chamber, and not yet learned to talk a great deal about nothing?

Prunk

Prunk. My duty is to ſay nothing about a great deal.

Scharfeneck. You play very prettily with an antitheſis. But, ſeriouſly, have you much to keep yourſelf?

Prunk. At leaſt, frequenting the Court, has taught me to *appear* as if I had.

Scharfeneck. You certainly have talents?

Prunk. That is my misfortune;—elſe I had not remained ſo long, only Valet of the Privy-Chamber.

Scharfeneck. How ſo?

Prunk. Great people love to conſider themſelves as creators. Now, a clever fellow is ſomething ready formed to their hands, and no creation of theirs; a ſtupid fellow, on the contrary, is a mere block; and if a prince form him into a Privy Counſellor, the manufacture is all his own.

Scharfeneck. You think the ſtupideſt fellows, riſe the moſt rapidly?

Prunk. They do not riſe, they are puſhed up.

Scharfeneck. And by whom?—by the women. Believe me, Prunk, Court favour is commonly the effect of female caprice.

Prunk. That cannot be, when your honour has never riſen beyond Gentleman of the Privy Chamber.

Scharfeneck. My own fault. Could I have cringed to the ugly painted creatures about the Court, I might have been Chamberlain long ago. But, my devotion to the fair ſex, has never been a matter of intereſt—if I ſee a lovely Madona countenance, I never concern myſelf with enquiring whether ſhe be a fag-end of quality, or not.

Prunk. (*With a ſignificant wink*) Miſs Jenny Morland for that!

Scharfeneck. You miſtake—I am quite off with her.

Prunk. Off!—again?

Scharfeneck. The girl can find no place in the creation, good enough for her little pert turned-up noſe. She would fain have ſeduced me into committing the greateſt folly of which a man can be guilty—matrimony; or, poſſibly her prudery was only intended as a varniſh to conceal the blemiſhes of her former intrigues.

Prunk. Intrigues!—ſhe has always been conſidered, as extremely modeſt and reſerved.

Scharfeneck. Modeſt!—But remember we are not alone.

(*Makes*

(Makes a ſign towards Ellfield, and then ſpeaks in a half whiſper to Prunk) Prunk, who is that ſtatue up in the corner?

Prunk. One Captain Ellfield.

Scharfeneck. What does he want?

Prunk. A penſion, no doubt—that's the cry of all theſe people.

Scharfeneck. Send him away.

Prunk. I have told him, twenty times, already, that his Excellency would not be ſpoken with, to-day,—but he will not ſtir.

Scharfeneck. A truly comic figure, faith!—he drags one foot like a crane, when it ſtands ſtretching out its neck upon ſome lofty pinnacle.

Prunk. He is lame from a ſhot in the leg.

Scharfeneck. He ſeems good for nothing but to be ſhot at. Look at his hand crammed ſo ſtiffly into his waiſt-coat.

Prunk. He has only a falſe arm.

Scharfeneck. Falſe?

Prunk. His own arm was carried away by a cannon ball.

Scharfeneck. You excite my curioſity. I'll amuſe myſelf with him, for a while *(To Ellfield)* Will you be ſeated, Sir?

Ellfield. I thank you.

Scharfeneck. Pray do not ſtand at that diſtance!

Ellfield. I thank you, ſincerely.

Scharfeneck. For what?

Ellfield. For a few civil words. If ſuch were not to be acknowledged, the art of making acknowledgments might ſoon be forgotten here.

Scharfeneck. *(Aſide)* Upon my word, the fellow is not an abſolute fool! *(To Ellfield.)* I am afraid, my uncle will not be ſeen to-day.

Ellfield. Then I muſt be content to do once more, as I have done every day for the laſt month.

Scharfeneck. That was?—

Ellfield. To come again the next day.

Scharfeneck. Captain, you muſt not conſider it as a particular affront to you; if amid the crowd of ſupplicants who daily throng around my uncle, he have not always the power of diſtinguiſhing between the man of real merit and the mere pretender.

Ellfield.

Ellfield. Miniſters are appointed for the purpoſe of learning thoſe diſtinctions.

Scharfeneck. What have you done for your native country?

Ellfield. My duty.

Scharfeneck. Then he will perform his.

Ellfield. I truſt ſo.

Scharfeneck. You have ſuffered much in the ſervice.

Ellfield. I am an abſolute cripple.

Scharfeneck. And your diſmiſſion is the only recompence you have received?

Ellfield. By which I am left without bread.

Scharfeneck. It is expenſive to live where the Prince reſides.

Ellfield. I am ſurprized at that.

Scharfeneck. Why ſurprized?

Ellfield. Becauſe the population is ſo thin.

Scharfeneck. What do you mean?—this city contains fifty thouſand inhabitants.

Ellfield. So I have been informed.

Scharfeneck. And with truth.

Ellfield. I can ſcarcely believe it. I brought at leaſt twenty recommendations from the army, to people who were ſaid to be reſident here; but, not one of them can I find; and if my viſits to this houſe are to be continued in vain for ſome weeks longer—

Scharfeneck. You would ſwear through thick and thin, that my uncle did not live here?

Ellfield. You are perfectly right.

Scharfeneck. Ha! ha! ha!—It is very obvious, that the Court is not your element.

Ellfield. Thank God, it is not!

Scharfeneck. Three things are indiſpenſably neceſſary to all who would make their way there;—ſound legs, a flexible back, and a ſmooth tongue.

Ellfield. With not one of which I am bleſſed.

Scharfeneck. Then, you are on the high road to ſtarvation.

Ellfield. Both my poor ſick wife, and myſelf, have been very near the end of our journey.

Scharfeneck. Married, too?

Ellfield. Yes.

Scharfeneck. Poor man!---And how did you help yourſelf?

Ellfield. I have no power of helping myſelf, as you ſee.

Scharfeneck. And foreign aid muſt not be expected within the atmoſphere you now breathe.

Ellfield. Philanthropy is to be found, even in the purlieus of a court.

Scharfeneck. By the help of Diogenes' lantern.

Ellfield. No, there are benevolent beings who can even ſeek out miſery, and, unſolicited, afford it conſolation, and aſſiſtance;—yet nobly keep their names in concealment.

Scharfeneck. Indeed! —I thought, I was tolerably well acquainted with the character of every one near the court; yet I confeſs myſelf at a loſs to divine who this may be?

Ellfield. She will not be known.

Scharfeneck. A *ſhe* too! —Oh haſten, dear Captain, to ſatisfy my curioſity!

Ellfield. I have told you all that I know myſelf; perhaps I have been to blame in ſaying ſo much—the bare mention of the circumſtance may be a tranſgreſſion againſt that benevolent creature's wiſh of ſecrecy. But, ſo few happy moments fall to my lot, that I can ſcarcely command myſelf, when I think of thoſe ſhe has afforded me.

Scharfeneck. Humph!—a lady!—Was ſhe young?—handſome?—

Ellfield. An angel!—Yet I am almoſt aſhamed of applying to her, a term ſo often miſuſed by poets and romance-writers.

Scharfeneck. And this unknown angel?—

Ellfield. By accident learned our diſtreſſes, and has ever ſince, even at midnight, brought conſolation to my garret.

Scharfeneck. At midnight!—

Ellfield. Virtues and crimes, alike, ſhun day-light; —the former from modeſty, the latter from fear.

Scharfeneck. I wiſh you joy, Captain,—a cripple, I perceive, may make conqueſts.

Ellfield. For ſhame, Sir.

Scharfeneck. Female virtue in the ſtreets at midnight! —Ha! ha! ha! —I know what to think of that.

Ellfield. Fool! —why did I give vent to my feelings in ſuch a place?

Scharfeneck.

Scharfeneck. In the great world, one ſoon loſes all belief in exalted virtue.

Ellfield. Then, for the firſt time, I feel my poverty a bleſſing!

SCENE II. — *The* MINISTER *enters from his cloſet.* SCHARFENECK *ſprings up from his ſeat, and bows very reſpectfully.*

Miniſter. Good morrow, Nephew! *(He looks at Ellfield, who bows,—he then turns angrily to Prunk)* I ordered that nobody ſhould be admitted to-day.

Prunk. The ſtrange gentleman would not take a refuſal. *(Prunk retires into the anti-chamber)*

Ellfield. (Approaching the Miniſter) For a month paſt, I have daily ſought acceſs to your Excellency.

Miniſter. Who are you?

Ellfield. Captain Ellfield, of the regiment of Braunſtein.

Miniſter. Ellfield!—of the regiment of Braunſtein!—right!—right!—I recollect your name.

Ellfield. And your Excellency will probably alſo recollect, that I have twice loſt my baggage, and am reduced to a cripple in the ſervice.

Miniſter. What do you want?

Ellfield. Bread!

Miniſter. Your opinions are not very conſiſtent with your neceſſitous ſituation.

Ellfield. My opinions can hardly be known to your Excellency.

Miniſter. Yet——

Ellfield. Yet, granted they were; I ſhould then feel the greater confidence in my petition's being granted.

Miniſter. What do you mean?

Ellfield. That I ſuppoſe principles of ſtrict integrity to be the moſt powerful recommendation by which any petition can be enforced.

Miniſter. Your Colonel was diſſatisfied with you.

Ellfield. My Colonel!—I hope——

Miniſter. You have diſſeminated principles—

Ellfield. I deſire to be judged by my actions: my crippled limbs bear ample teſtimony, that I have fulfilled my duty. Yet, I would not ſhrink from an inveſtigation of my principles; — may I aſk your Excellency of what I am accuſed?

Miniſter. Of making improper remarks upon the war.

Ellfield. Could my Colonel be guilty of conduct ſo diſhonourable as to make a private converſation the ſubject of an official report?

Miniſter. Recollect, that one indiſcreet word will often do more miſchief, than a thouſand brave arms can repair.

Ellfield. My remarks were only ſuch as might be made with the ſtricteſt propriety, among a circle of friends over a bottle.

Miniſter. What reliance was to be placed upon that friendſhip?—

Ellfield. Experience informs me—alas, too late!

Miniſter. You would have acted more prudently in times like the preſent, when all the bonds that unite ſociety are relaxed, not to truſt too implicitly to thoſe of friendſhip.—I wiſh you a good morning, Sir.

Ellfield. Your Excellency has at leaſt laid down a doctrine, whence, bitter as it is, I might draw an inference that would furniſh me ſome conſolation, amid the agonies of diſappointed hope;—for where all other bonds are relaxed, why is that to be regarded which would force us to live?—and, of what value is life to one bowed to the earth by corporeal and mental ſuffering?—Yes, with my one remaining arm I ſhould certainly diſcharge a piſtol through that head which has been the undeſigned cauſe of my misfortune; did not an unfortunate being, who in my happier days united her fate with mine, look to me alone for ſolace and ſupport.—But I dare not leave a helpleſs wife, a prey to hunger and deſpair! — However reluctant I may be therefore to ſolicit farther; I muſt ſtill entreat your Excellency to grant me ſome trifling penſion, that may preſerve us from the extremity of want. Do not ſuppoſe this hat, ſhot through in ſo many places, is worn from oſtentation—believe me, I have no other. My ſword, and a heart glowing with love for my native country, is all the wealth fate has left me.

Miniſter.

Miniſter. I will take ſome opportunity of laying your caſe before the Prince.

Ellfield. When may I hope? —

Miniſter. At preſent, we are ſo overpowered with State affairs;—and, beſides, the Prince has not, of late, been in a particularly good humour: — call again, in a few weeks.

Ellfield. In a few weeks!—Good God!—Your Excellency muſt ſurely be aware, that every hour is an age to the miſerable.

Miniſter. Perhaps, it may be ſooner—I will ſend for you. (*Ellfield bows and retires with ſlow and ſorrowful ſteps*) Theſe people grow every day more numerous and importunate.

Scharfeneck. He is not ſo wretched as he appears.

Miniſter. Do you know him?

Scharfeneck. Not much. I only know that the poor afflicted cripple, even now occaſions many a ſleepleſs night, to many a kind-hearted lady.

Miniſter. Indeed! — Aye, it will certainly be right to keep a watchful eye over the man. He is a philoſopher; and they are always a dangerous ſet of people,—even without arms or legs.

SCENE III. — *Enter* ALLBRAND.

Allbrand. Your Excellency's orders are obeyed; the letters are ready for ſignature.

Miniſter. And may I expect ſoon to receive the elucidations neceſſary for impoſing the new duties?

Allbrand. Morland promiſed them to-day.

Miniſter. The old book-worm has had a glorious rummage among duſty parchments.

Allbrand. He enters very warmly into the citizens' cauſe

Scharfeneck. A fanatic, who is always talking about his beloved Grecians.

Miniſter. Let him take heed to himſelf.

Allbrand. I have adviſed him to that effect. We are old friends; but the welfare of the ſtate muſt ſuperſede all private friendſhips.

Scharfeneck.

Scharfeneck. He endeavours to inſtil his Swiſs principles into the people.

Allbrand. It is always dangerous to truſt ſuch kind of men in any poſt.

Miniſter. Woe to him, if his influence over the citizens be miſuſed!

Scharfeneck. He degrades the dignity of his office—talks with the meaneſt mechanic, as if he were his brother.

Miniſter. Cannot his wife inſpire him with better notions?—She is of a genteel family.

Scharfeneck. He ridicules all ſuch ideas—he is always yawning in the audience chamber,—and goes into the firſt circles with a cropped head.

Allbrand. I have known him for eighteen years—even from his childhood, he was raſh and headſtrong.

Miniſter. Enough. The Prince ſhall know all;—he muſt be narrowly watched.

Allbrand. I tremble for my friend!—yet, were he my own brother,—I feel ſufficient reſolution to become a ſecond Timoleon, for the ſake of my country.

Prunk. *(Enters)* Syndicus Morland, Sir.

Miniſter. Shew him in.

SCENE IV.—*Enter* MORLAND.

Miniſter. What brings the good Syndicus hither?—

Morland. I hope, your Excellency will find theſe repreſentations on the part of the citizens to be juſt.

Miniſter. Repreſentations!—I only required ſuch information from various old documents, as might aſſiſt in eſtabliſhing the new duties.

Morland. It is from thoſe old documents, that the matter contained in theſe repreſentations, is derived;—I have compreſſed it to the utmoſt of my power. *(Gives him a large parcel of papers)*

Miniſter. Do you ſuppoſe, that the Prince will read all theſe ſheets?

Morland.

Morland. Moſt certainly; — for I know him to be the upright Father of his people.

Miniſter. But uprightneſs cannot enſure a man againſt fatigue.

Morland. If the happineſs of a nation can be purchaſed at the expence only of a little fatigue to its ruler; it is cheaply obtained.

Miniſter. What do you mean?

Morland. That I am confident, a Prince, like ours, will not think any buſineſs fatiguing, which may ultimately promote the happineſs of his ſubjects.

Miniſter. And the reſult of theſe repreſentations?—

Morland. Is a humble hope on the part of the citizens, that the impoſition of the intended duties will be relinquiſhed.

Miniſter. The pretext for which hope, is?——

Morland. Neceſſity.—Your Excellency well knows, how ſmall is the productive, how great the conſuming trade about a court. Our inland manufactures are little encouraged; they are almoſt entirely ſuperſeded by the Engliſh.—A thouſand rapid ſtreams flow out of this city,—one little rivulet alone flows into it. What is ſaved by induſtry, and diligence in trade, is ſwallowed up by duties on every thing that we eat and drink, on our ſtock, our property—

Miniſter. My God! why this enumeration?—I regret the citizens' diſtreſſes as much as you; but, the neceſſities of the State——

Morland. I know, muſt be conſidered;—nor are the citizens inſenſible to the convulſion that ſhakes all Europe; but they know alſo, that we inhabit a happy corner of the earth, which nature, united with the wiſdom of its rulers, have preſerved from theſe convulſions; and they hope—

Miniſter. Theſe are things, Mr. Syndicus, of which, thoſe only who preſide in the Cabinet, can be proper judges.

Morland. I have done my duty.

Miniſter. Leſs of duty, I deſire; and more conſideration for the State.

Morland. He who ſeeks the people's happineſs, manifeſt the greateſt love for the State.

Miniſter. Inſolent!—But I warn you, Mr. Syndicus, that

that we live in times, when the baniſhment of turbulent ſpirits, is, perhaps, one of the moſt ſacred duties of thoſe who guide the helm of affairs. (*Exit*)

SCENE V.—*Manent* SCHARFENECK, MORLAND, *and* ALLBRAND. MORLAND *ſhrugs his ſhoulders in ſilence, as the* MINISTER *goes out.*

Scharfeneck. Ha! ha! ha!—You, literati, are always running your heads againſt a poſt;—you laugh at the courtiers, and call them inſignificant beings; but I would venture any wager, that a gentleman of the Privy-Chamber, in your ſituation, would have conducted himſelf in a very different manner.

Morland. I don't doubt it.

Scharfeneck. This is always the caſe among people unaccuſtomed to courtly manners. Obſerve the Pagods that ornament the chimney-piece in the Anti-Chamber;—the Court is the benignant region, whence proceeds all genial warmth; but whoever would ſhare its ſmiles, muſt nod their heads, like thoſe Pagods, and be careful not to ſtand in any body's way.

Morland. You forget that the citizens prepare the wood which enables both them and their reſemblances to nod.

Scharfeneck. Bravo!—Ha! ha! ha! (*Takes a pinch of ſnuff*) *A propos*,—how does the lady your wife?

Morland. Perfectly well.

Scharfeneck. Indeed?—Perfectly well?

Morland. What do you mean by that ſneer?

Scharfeneck. Did not your ſiſter ſpend ſome months in the country, laſt Summer?

Morland. She did.

Scharfeneck. What malicious interpretations may not be put upon the moſt innocent actions!

Morland. How ſo?

Scharfeneck. You know the world.—What indeed could be more natural than that a Swiſs girl ſhould wiſh, for ſome refreſhing Alpine breezes.—But, people about the Court have no idea of ſuch natural wiſhes.—In ſhort, town prattle

is like a bottle of Champagne; and the pureſt motives are only a cork, which it throws up ſuddenly into the air.

Morland. What ſuch people ſay or think, is to me, matter of perfect indifference.

Scharfeneck. Don't plume yourſelf too highly upon your ſtoiciſm—the hardeſt ſtone may, in time, be worn away, only by the drippings of the rain. Truſt the warning of a friend—be a little leſs zealous in the citizens' cauſe, and ſomewhat more attentive to your domeſtic concerns,—elſe it may fare with you as with Cato and Marcus Aurelius. (*Exit affectedly*)

SCENE VI.—*Manent* ALLBRAND *and* MORLAND.

Morland. Allbrand, what does he mean?—am I become a common talk to the whole town?—Am I ſo fallen, that every fool is to jingle his cap and bells in my ears?

Allbrand. The coxcomb ſerves every body in the ſame way.

Morland. Let him divert himſelf at my expence, as much as he pleaſes; but by Heaven, he ſhall not ſport with the characters of my wife and ſiſter!—I will break the raſcal's head if he dare——

Allbrand. Dear Morland, how many heads muſt you break, if——

Morland. How!—What!—Name the carrion progeny who are ſo ready to caw and ſcratch where they ſuppoſe they have diſcovered a fallen deer!—I will make an example of them!—Theſe right honourable goſſips, though related to the Abyſſinian monarch himſelf, ſhall—

Allbrand. Morland, Morland, you forget yourſelf.

Morland. No!—when my wife's virtue is called in queſtion—

Allbrand. You do not recollect where we are.

Morland. I would tear the very prieſt from the altar, who ſhould dare to caſt aſperſions on Emilia!

Allbrand. The Miniſter's diſpleaſure has put you out of temper.

SCENE VII. *Enter the* MINISTER *from his cloſet.*

Miniſter. I thought, I heard altercation.

Allbrand. Heaven forbid!

Miniſter. (*To Morland*) Have you any farther buſineſs with me, Mr. Syndicus?

Morland. None, pleaſe your Excellency.

Miniſter. You would do well to govern your haſty temper, in my houſe.

Morland. I acknowledge my fault, and intreat your pardon—there are moments when powerful feeling will overcome good manners.

Miniſter. Probably, important buſineſs may await you at home.

Morland. To intrude on the great, never was my failing.

Miniſter. Some people have ſtrange ideas of behaviour.

Morland. Indeed, the air of the audience-chamber, is not ſalutary to the inhabitant of the Alps!—he ſickens in it, both in body and mind.

Miniſter. The air of a priſon is a ſovereign remedy for ſuch diſeaſes.

Morland. Such was the opinion of the Auſtrian governors, four centuries ago. I am your Excellency's moſt humble ſervant. (*Exit.*)

SCENE VIII.—*The* MINISTER *and* ALLBRAND.

Miniſter. The Auſtrian governors!—what does he mean?—who were thoſe governors?

Allbrand. An inſolent alluſion to the hiſtory of the Swiſs confederacy.

Miniſter. The pedant aſſumes it as a certainty, that every body muſt be as converſant with the hiſtory of his rugged

rugged countrymen, as himſelf. But, what was paſſing here?

Allbrand. Your Excellency is irritated; and I would by no means increaſe your anger. Morland *is*, or at leaſt *was*, my friend.

Miniſter. I cannot ſuffer my queſtions to be evaded. Whom does this matter concern ſo much as myſelf?

Allbrand. Your Excellency is undoubtedly my benefactor, my patron—

Miniſter. And as ſuch I command you to ſpeak.

Allbrand. The whole affair originated in an unmeaning joke made by your Excellency's nephew, which occaſioned Morland immediately to caſt reflections upon all nobility, calling them *carrion progeny*.

Miniſter. The tongue is the citizen's favourite weapon.

Allbrand. And, when I admoniſhed him gently, to conſider where we were; he ſcoffed at the reproof, and aſſured me, he would not ſpare even the prieſt at the altar.

Miniſter. The man is ripe for deſtruction—a little puff of wind, and he falls.

Allbrand. Alas! my poor friend! (*Affects to wipe tears from his eyes.*)

Miniſter. You weep?

Allbrand. So wept Brutus, when obliged to condemn his ſons.

Miniſter. Friendſhip muſt yield to duty. Allbrand, I have great confidence in you;—your admirable "*Patriotic reflections*" are ſafe in my port-folio;—the prince ſhall ſee, and will doubtleſs reward them. In the mean time, an opportunity is preſented to you, of acquiring new merit with the State;—continue to maintain an appearance of friendſhip with Morland—obſerve him narrowly, and every evening, impart your obſervations to me—it is of importance that I ſhould know this man thoroughly. (*Exit*)

SCENE IX.—ALLBRAND *alone.*

Be it ſo—you ſhall find, that you have not miſtaken your man. Morland haſtens faſt into the ſnare which he has himſelf afforded the means of ſpreading for his de-

ſtruction. I could eaſily, at this very moment, drive him into quitting his poſt, even into leaving the town, but then Emilia would be the companion of his flight; and I ſhould be no gainer;—my only proſpect of attaining the object to which I aſpire, is, by the removal of himſelf alone. That once accompliſhed,—even if I cannot overcome Emilia's prudery, I ſhall at leaſt be revenged upon it; and revenge would be enjoyment, though but of a ſecondary nature. But, firſt, I muſt by ſome means procure the ſketch of the "*Patriotic Reflections*,"—that muſt not be left in his hands, as a witneſs againſt me—then will I awaken the diſtruſt of the citizens, and all is over with the Syndicus.

SCENE X.—*Enter* PILZ.

Pilz. (*Peeping in*) Hiſt! hiſt!—Mr. Secretary!

Allbrand. Well, what news?

Pilz. Are we alone?

Allbrand. Quite alone.

Pilz. I have made a great diſcovery.

Allbrand. Tell it quickly, then.

Pilz. Laſt night, as I was upon duty, patroling about the ſtreets, I ſaw a well-dreſſed woman, followed by a maid, with a bundle under her arm, ſteal ſoftly acroſs the caſtle-ſquare. She looked anxiouſly round her, ſeveral times, while I thought within myſelf, who can this be?—when ſhe came to the well, ſhe ſtopped, and hemmed three or four times; and in a few moments the houſe-door, at No. 312, was opened, and ſhe entered. I remained wandering about the ſquare for more than an hour,—to be ſure the time ſeemed a little tedious, but at laſt the door opened again, and the lady came out;—ſhe was attended to the door by a man, of whom ſhe took leave very kindly, promiſing to viſit him again the next night. With that, ſhe tripped haſtily away; and I ſtole ſoftly after her, till ſhe reached her own houſe.—
—And now, whom do you think ſhe might be?

Allbrand. Some kind-hearted lady, I ſuppoſe.

Pilz. Mrs. Morland, as I live.

Allbrand. You are mad!

Pilz.

Pilz. Mad!—Not a bit of it!—I'll conſent to live upon bread and water, for a month, if it was any body elſe. She attempted to unlock the garden-door, and as it was dark put aſide her veil, to find the key-hole more readily. I took the opportunity of throwing the light of my dark-lantern directly upon her face, and ſaw her too plainly to be miſtaken.

Allbrand. And do you know whom ſhe had been viſiting?

Pilz. I fetched the conſtable immediately, and he ſays, that the houſe belongs to an old woman, and up in the garret lives one Captain Ellfield, who I ſuppoſe was the perſon that let her in and attended her out.

Allbrand. Impoſſible.

Pilz. Nay, very certain; for he is the only man in the houſe.

Allbrand. Do you know him?

Pilz. No, but I know that he is very poor.

Allbrand. Are you certain of the truth of this ſtory?

Pilz. Give me a box on the ear every day, for the reſt of my life, if I did not laſt night ſee Mrs. Morland go to viſit Captain Ellfield.

Allbrand. But, what the devil could ſhe want with him?

Pilz. That's more than I know.

Allbrand. *(In a murmur to himſelf)* Humph!—I can ſcarcely ſuſpect any thing amiſs here!—but, no matter!—it has that appearance at leaſt; and I can make it of important uſe in forwarding my plans. It may be employed as an engine for betraying the huſband into the commiſſion of ſome raſh action, and of intimidating the wife into compliance with my wiſhes. Yes, it is a moſt fortunate accident!—*(To Pilz)* The Captain, you ſay, is poor?

Pilz. So the conſtable aſſerts.

Allbrand. Very poor?

Pilz. In want even of bread!

Allbrand. So much the better!

Pilz. Have you never ſeen him?—He has attended daily at his Excellency's, for ſome weeks paſt, to ſolicit a penſion.

Allbrand. Ha!—the ſame!—excellent!—conduct me to him.

Pilz. Now?—at this inſtant?

Allbrand.

Allbrand. At this very inſtant.

Pilz. We have not far to go.—No. 312, in the Caſtle Square. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE XI. — ELLFIELD'S *Lodgings.*

Mrs. ELLFIELD, *alone, in a white morning dreſs, which ſhe ſurveys ſeverat times.*

'Tis too fine, too expenſive for my preſent ſituation!—Admirable woman!—Now, I am once more out of bed, and clothed again; I could fancy myſelf in perfect health! Had I a little more colour, no one would imagine that I had ſo lately, for ten days together, been on the very brink of the grave. My hands, my ſtrength, are reſtored; I can walk and ſtand without the aſſiſtance of a ſtick, or ſupporting myſelf againſt the wall!—thanks!—eternal thanks! to my benefactreſs, and my dear Charles's love, for this reſtoration!—But my huſband does not return! (*She goes to the window*) I dreſſed myſelf only for him—I know he will rejoice to ſee me thus!—My clothes perhaps may not be well adjuſted!—but—(*She draws out a broken pocket looking-glaſs*) There was a time, when I was accuſtomed to a ſplendid toilette, with a glaſs in which I could ſee myſelf from head to foot!—fye! fye!—I ought not to beſtow one thought upon ſuch follies!—My Charles is ſtill ſpared, and all other loſſes are ſcarcely worth a ſigh!—He is a cripple, alas!—but his heart beats with equal warmth for me, as in his proſperous days; and my hands ſhall labour for his ſupport!—When he was borne wounded from the field of battle, and I knelt in deſpair beſide his almoſt lifeleſs body; had I another wiſh, or could I breathe another prayer, ſave for his recovery?—My prayers were heard!—he did recover!—and I am happy!

SCENE

SCENE XII. — *Enter* CAPTAIN ELLFIELD.

Mrs. Ellfield. Are you at laſt returned, my Charles!

Ellfield. My deareſt Caroline! *(He obſerves her with looks of ſatisfaction)*

Mrs. Ellfield. Are you pleaſed to ſee me thus?

Ellfield. *(Embracing her)* Let this be my anſwer!— You ſurely underſtand it?

Mrs. Ellfield. My heart is its interpreter.

Ellfield. But have you not ventured up too ſoon?

Mrs. Ellfield. No, I feel perfectly recovered.

Ellfield. You look pale ſtill.

Mrs. Ellfield. I mean to take a ſhort walk, to-day—I think, the air will revive me.

Ellfield. Do not run any hazards; a relapſe might coſt you your life.

Mrs. Ellfield. Oh, you need not fear a relapſe.

Ellfield. Remember, that I cannot live without you.

Mrs. Ellfield. Have you again been diſappointed?

Ellfield. I have at length ſeen the Miniſter.

Mrs. Ellfield. Indeed!— Well?—

Ellfield. Alas!

Mrs. Ellfield. Speak, I entreat.

Ellfield. May heaven bleſs you, my Caroline!

Mrs. Ellfield. I am bleſſed!

Ellfield. Alas!—how?

Mrs. Ellfield. In your love!

Ellfield. *(Taking her hand, much affected)* Deareſt wife!—you underſtand the art of making even a cripple worthy of envy!

SCENE XIII. *Enter* ALLBRAND.

Allbrand. *(As he enters)* I hope, I do not miſtake the houſe?

Ellfield. Whom ſeek you, Sir?

Allbrand. Captain Ellfield.

Ellfield.

Ellfield. I am that perſon.

Allbrand. (*Seeing Mrs. Ellfield, ſtarts*) And this lady?—

Ellfield. Is my wife.

Allbrand. You are married, then?

Ellfield. You ſeem ſurprized at that?—May I aſk with whom I have the honour of ſpeaking.

Allbrand. As a man can ſcarcely be allowed at a firſt viſit, to aſſume the name of FRIEND, I beg leave to conceal mine.

Ellfield. This is moſt extraordinary!—While thoſe on whom I have ſome claim for friendſhip, forſake me; I am indebted to ſtrangers for conſolation and ſupport.

Allbrand. I know your ſtory; I conſider your fate as hard,—and my ſituation may enable me to improve it. I enjoy a conſiderable ſhare of the Miniſter's favour.

Ellfield. You will find your patronage not beſtowed upon ungrateful hearts.

Allbrand. I will engage to procure you a competent penſion——if——

Ellfield. That *if*, ſeems to imply ſome condition.—Is it one that I am in a ſituation to fulfil.

Allbrand. Silence and confidence are all I require.

Ellfield. Both which, are in the power even of a beggar.

Allbrand. You often receive viſits from Mrs. Morland.

Ellfield. Mrs. Morland?

Mrs. Ellfield. Mrs. Morland?

Allbrand. I ſurely do not miſtake?

Mrs. Ellfield. Is Mrs. Morland, the lady to whom we are ſo much indebted?

Allbrand. How!—do you not know her?

Ellfield. Till this moment, we only knew her heart.

Allbrand. Yet, ſhe has often, at midnight—

Mrs. Ellfield. Often, indeed!—and, like an angel, has reſcued me from death.

Allbrand. Yet never told her name?

Ellfield. Never!

Allbrand. It was like herſelf!—Her ſoul is truly noble!

Mrs. Ellfield. It is indeed!

Ellfield. Moſt truly ſo!

Allbrand. And ſhe has promiſed this night——

Mrs. Ellfield. To ſee us again.

Ellfield. And enjoy the fruit of her benevolence.

Allbrand. Would you render this lady an eſſential ſervice?

Ellfield. I would ſacrifice my life for her!

Allbrand. This encourages me to inform you, in confidence, that I am ſo bleſt as to enjoy her love.

Mrs. Ellfield. She is then unmarried?

Allbrand. No, ſhe is married, but, alas, unhappily!

Mrs. Ellfield. Yet, if ſhe be unhappy,—to ſuch a woman, her duty muſt be ſacred.

Allbrand. That is the very point.—Upon this ſubject ſhe entertains ſtrong prejudices.

Ellfield. *Prejudices*, Sir!

Allbrand. Which time would baniſh, could ſhe be perſuaded—

Ellfield. Of what?

Allbrand. Permit me to meet her at theſe nightly viſits?—Your lodging is perfectly private—perfectly retired.—If I might ſee her, here, alone?—Or perhaps you would lend your aſſiſtance in combating ſome childiſh notions—

Ellfield. *(Trembling with indignation)* Oh, Poverty! Poverty! to what humiliation doſt thou reduce a man!

Mrs. Ellfield. *(Sinking down on a chair)* This is too much!

Allbrand. I hope you do not miſunderſtand me?—I pledge my honour, that every thing relative to the penſion, ſhall be finiſhed to-morrow!—and do not ſuppoſe, that my gratitude ſhall be confined to that alone. *(He draws out a purſe)* Be this, an earneſt—

Ellfield. (*Enraged*) Sir, I know you not,—I am ignorant of your rank and name; but whatever they may be, unleſs you quit my room peaceably, this inſtant; you ſhall find, that a cripple, when his honour is inſulted, has ſtrength ſufficient to kick a ſcoundrel down ſtairs.

Allbrand. This—to me?

Ellfield. Yes,—though you were next heir to the throne!—Begone, or I ſhall make uſe of the rights my own houſe gives me.

Allbrand. Very well, Captain Ellfield —But remember that the penſion is forfeited by your own indiſcretion;

you are yourſelf alone reſponſible for whatever conſequences may enſue. *(Exit)*

Ellfield. Scoundrel! — did he hope to make me his pimp!—me!—

Mrs. Ellfield. Who can the villain be?

Ellfield. Some Courtier, no doubt, who judges of us, by himſelf.

Mrs. Ellfield. We muſt conceal this circumſtance from our benefactreſs.

Ellfield. Moſt certainly. Innocence, like hers, would be ſhocked at hearing that it was ſuſpected capable of corruption. But I will not ſuffer her to go home, again, alone.

Mrs. Ellfield. Charles, we have only potatoes for dinner; yet, how much happier is our lot than his!

Ellfield. *(Claſping her to his boſom)* Our hearts are pure, though our fare is homely.

Mrs. Ellfield. He would ſhame poverty.

Ellfield. For the ſake of mankind, heaven guard ſuch villains from poverty! — *(Curtain falls)*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The* MINISTER'S *Audience Chamber.*—PRUNK, *Sitting and Reading*—*Enter* ALLBRAND *haſtily.*

ALLBRAND.

IS the Miniſter at home?

Prunk. Yes.

Allbrand. I muſt ſpeak with him directly, upon urgent buſineſs.

Prunk. He will not ſee you.

Allbrand. Why not?

Prunk. He is at cards.

Allbrand. So much the better!—Has he ill-luck?

Prunk. I believe ſo.

Allbrand. So much the better again!

Prunk. So much the worſe, I think.

Allbrand. Go and whiſper in his ear——

Prunk. He will bid me go to the devil!

Allbrand. My buſineſs is of the utmoſt importance.

Prunk. At Court, many things are very important in the morning, that become quite inſignificant in the evening over the card table.

Allbrand. I muſt poſitively——

Prunk. You will damn your own cauſe.

Allbrand. With all my heart!

Prunk. Well, if you chuſe to run the hazard!—(*Exit.*)

Allbrand. (*Alone*) If he have loſt, he will be ſo much

much the more petulant and ill-tempered—his ears here, his heart at the card table, eager to retrieve his loſſes. Then he will not ſtay long, but ſay at once,—" you know what had beſt be done, follow your own judgment,"—and thus will my point be completely carried. Summon up all thy confidence, Allbrand!—chance ſmiles upon thee—thy good genius beckons thee forward!—How fortunate that I ſhould meet young Scharfeneck at ſuch a moment, and learn from him ſo many circumſtances, to make my ſtory appear the more probable!—But, Prunk returns—

SCENE II.—*Re-enter* PRUNK, *and ſoon after, Enter the* MINISTER.

Prunk. He is coming.

Allbrand. In what ſort of humour?

Prunk. So croſs and ſnappiſh, that I have no deſire to be one of his auditors. *(Exit into the anti-chamber.)*

Allbrand. Go, and welcome!—your company is not wanted.

Miniſter. *(Entering)* Well, what's the matter?

Allbrand. A melancholy diſcovery!

Miniſter. Haſten to tell it, then.

Allbrand. Morland is a traitor!

Miniſter. You have freſh proofs againſt him?

Allbrand. The moſt undoubted!—He holds a ſecret intercourſe——

Miniſter. With whom?

Allbrand. One Captain Ellfield.

Miniſter. I know the fellow.

Allbrand. They meet at dead of night—

Miniſter. Where?

Allbrand. At the Captain's lodgings.

Miniſter. Are you certain of this?

Allbrand. I know from eye-witneſſes, that Morland ſteals by night to the houſe of this man; though by day he denies any knowledge of him.

Miniſter. Enough to create ſuſpicion!—But what is to be done?

Allbrand. If we could catch him in the very fact—

Miniſter.

Miniſter. True!—he might be ſent at once to priſon.

Allbrand. His papers might alſo be ſeized.

Miniſter. And he himſelf brought to a ſpeedy trial.

Allbrand. If your Excellency would inveſt me with full powers for ſuch a procedure—

Miniſter. By all means!—but ſuppoſing his papers ſhould prove nothing againſt him?—the Prince, you know, requires the utmoſt forbearance and circumſpection in theſe matters.

Allbrand. The fact is beyond a doubt.

Miniſter. Well, then—

Allbrand. May I deſire a written order?—

Miniſter. (*Impatiently*) Now, directly?—

Allbrand. Or if your Excellency would give directions to the police-officer who waits without—

Miniſter. Let him come in.

Allbrand. (*Opens the door and calls*) Pilz!

SCENE III.—*Enter* PILZ.

Miniſter. (*To Pilz*) I have charged my ſecretary with an important commiſſion;—follow his directions implicitly. (*Pilz bows obedience. The Miniſter addreſſes Allbrand*)—Have you any thing elſe to mention?

Allbrand. Nothing!—Does your Excellency recollect any further orders?

Miniſter. Only a ſtrict injunction to proceed cautiouſly—I ſhall expect your report early to-morrow morning.—(*Exit.*)

Allbrand. (*Rubbing his hands*) All ſucceeds admirably!—(*To Pilz*) Come to my apartment; there you ſhall receive your inſtructions. No; firſt ſeek the Gentleman of the Privy Chamber; and ſay that I requeſt to ſee him for a few moments—tell him of his Excellency's and of his Highneſs's commands!—away!—inſtantly!—(*Exit Pilz*) That was an admirable thought!—Scharfeneck ſhall ſeize and ſeal up the papers. The ſketch of the "*Patriotic Reflections*" I *muſt* have!—much depends upon that!—much!—very much!—(*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.—MORLAND'S *houſe.* JENNY *is diſcovered at work;* SMITH *ſtanding and leaning over the back of a chair at a little diſtance, with his eyes fixed upon her.—They remain ſilent, ſome minutes.*

Jenny. My brother is very late!—he keeps the dinner waiting a long time.

Smith. It muſt be my fault, if the time appear ſo very tedious.

Jenny. How ſo?

Smith. I do not underſtand how to talk.

Jenny. On the contrary, I have often, at table, admired your talents for converſation.

Smith. I ought rather to be ſilent there, and talk here.

Jenny. The reverſe is the moſt natural; ſince in the company of a woman only, the ſubjects for converſation are ſo much more confined.

Smith. But what they loſe in variety, they gain in intereſt.

Jenny. You have, I perceive, been ſo far initiated into the myſteries of the faſhionable world, that you are an adept at making compliments.

Smith. I never make compliments,—I always ſpeak truth.

Jenny. *(Confuſed, after a pauſe)* Is it long, ſince you left England?

Smith. Many months.

Jenny. And have you never, like a Swiſs, experienced the *mal-du-pays?*

Smith. Sometimes.

Jenny. Why, then, do you not return?—A man of your talents might find employment any where.

Smith. Do you wiſh to get rid of me?

Jenny. Heaven forbid!

Smith. I cannot return, *alone,* to my native country.

Jenny. Then, why not marry?

Smith. 'Tis my ardent wiſh!

Jenny. Not that it is a ſtep I would recommend.

Smith.

Smith. Why not?

Jenny. Becauſe, if you ſuppoſe all married people to be as happy as my brother and ſiſter, you miſtake.

Smith. I ſhall not eaſily be brought to think ſo.

Jenny. Moſt matches are unhappy.

Smith. Of that I very much doubt.

Jenny. I can plead frequent obſervation of the fact, in ſupport of my aſſertion. Two young people fall deſperately in love with each other, and think they never can exiſt aſunder;—a head-ſtrong father, or a croſs guardian, interpoſes, and thwarts their wiſhes:—the young people ſigh and pine,—and pine and ſigh,—till at length the old people's hearts are melted. Then the lovers fancy they ſtand upon the higheſt pinnacle of fortune's temple, and claſped in each other's arms, look down with indifference on every object, in the buſy world around them;—they ruſh forward into wedlock, as the night-walker to the loweſt edge of the ſloping roof, when ſuddenly ſome one calls, they ſtart, they wake, and down they fall.

Smith. A very ingenious ſimile; but the poſition on which it is founded, is not fact.

Jenny. And there lie the poor ſouls, ſtretched in the mire of *ennui*, exchanging looks of diſcontent with each other. If, indeed, they be at bottom, people of ſenſe and worth; powerful habit, after a while, will come to their aſſiſtance; till at length, they will learn to endure each other's foibles with patience; and each will jog on contentedly along the paved foot path, to which his ſteps muſt be confined; thankful if no thorns ſpring up to obſtruct and wound him as he proceeds.

Smith. But if eſteem be the mother of love?—

Jenny. She is, at beſt, no more than a ſtep-mother.

Smith. Thoſe who can reaſon upon love, have indeed never loved.

Jenny. And are to be envied.

Smith. To be pitied.

Jenny. An unknown happineſs can have no charms.

Smith. A falſe axiom. Do you ſuppoſe that miners, condemned to grovel at an immenſe depth under ground, never long to behold the ſun?

Jenny. You have high ideas of love.

Smith. And ſtill higher of wedlock. *(He puſhes the chair on which he leans, ſomewhat nearer to Jenny, but without*

out altering his poſition) Love ties two beings together; —wedlock makes them only one. Love drinks down large draughts from the cup of joy;—wedlock ſips up the ſweets, a drop at a time; nor finiſhes them till arrived at the very brink of the grave. Love is a caterpillar, devouring dainties;—wedlock, the ſame caterpillar, transformed into a butterfly, when it feeds only upon the purer nouriſhment of the fragrance exhaled by flowers. Years roll on; but a good wife never becomes old;—winter ſucceeds to ſummer; but wedded happineſs never chills. The kiſs of a chaſte wife, is the ſtamp with which nature ſeals her choiceſt bleſſings;—ſtorms roar above; lightning flaſhes around; but where domeſtic love dwells, every trouble, every ſorrow, is but half felt—every joy, every pleaſure, is doubled.

Jenny. You grow animated.

Smith. (*Sitting down and drawing the chair nearer to her*) Woe to that man who could remain cold and inſenſible, while deſcanting on female beauty and virtue!—who would drink out of the ſame cup with him?—Woe to the man who pays no more reſpect to a good wife, than to his night-gown; but, becauſe ſhe adminiſters daily, nay hourly, to his comfort, receives her attentions without one grateful feeling; and only learns to prize domeſtic happineſs, when loſt for ever!——Let thy crowns, O Chance! be ſcattered about like flakes of ſnow; I would not catch at one;—I only aſk thee to beſtow upon me, the ſimple garland of love! (*He draws his chair ſtill nearer*) Should I at length find what I have, ſo many years, ſought, —find my hopes, my wiſhes, realized—then farewel, ye petty tyrants of the mind, ambition, thirſt of fame, ardour to obtain the palm of wit!—my heart ſhall have no room for any gueſt but love. The ſweet calm of domeſtic peace, firm union of ſouls, a taſte for the joys of nature, love for the unempoiſoned air of the country, for rural paſtimes, for the pleaſures of retirement, where we may live remote from envy and calumny—from—

Jenny. (*Working very eagerly, and perpetually breaking her thread*) Our fineſt dreams are ſeldom realized.

Smith. (*Drawing his chair, by degrees, quite cloſe to her*) That I love, is no dream;—but that I flatter myſelf with my love being returned, in equal portion, may perhaps be the mere effect of a preſumptuous viſion. For the firſt time in my life, I feel my happineſs dependant upon the

favour

favour of others; and, for the firſt time in my life, I tremble. Words are but poor interpreters of our thoughts; let this tremor vouch the truth of my feelings?

Jenny. Smith, whence theſe emotions?

Smith. (*Taking her hand, eagerly*) When a man feels to his inmoſt ſoul,—feels ſo that he can ſcarcely ſpeak;—when his voice faulters—through the tears—that would force a paſſage—to his eyes—Oh, can his ſincerity be doubted!—

Jenny. Smith!—for heaven's ſake!—

Smith. This moment decides the happineſs or miſery of my future life!—an honeſt man ſolicits your hand—an ardent lover ſolicits your heart.

Jenny. The agitation I witneſs, ſpeaks in a language that cannot be miſtaken—but—

Smith. My birth indeed is humble.

Jenny. That was not what I was going to obſerve.

Smith. My poſſeſſions are ſmall, but ſufficient to ſatisfy moderate wiſhes.

Jenny. I do not intend to ſell my heart.

Smith. Be it then the reward of honourable love!

Jenny. Allow me time for conſideration, dear Smith!

Smith. I thank you ſincerely! (*Kiſſes her hand with tranſport*) What can be more grateful to an honeſt heart, than the aſſurance that it ſhall be proved?

SCENE V.—*Enter* EMILIA *leading* MORLAND *by the hand.*

Emilia. Here he is at laſt, but in a terribly ſerious humour.

Jenny. What is the matter, brother?

Morland. Nothing!—overpowered with buſineſs.

Emilia. You have uſually been, at leaſt, cheerful at dinner.

Morland. Becauſe I was not oppreſſed with care—But do not mind me—this will paſs away in time.

Emilia. We have expected you with great anxiety;—you were always accuſtomed to ſend, when you could not dine at home.

Morland. Forgive me—I forgot—the Miniſter—

Jenny. The Miniſter?—what of him?

Morland. *(Laying his hand upon his forehead)* Excuſe me—I am not well—my head aches—I feel, as if I were intoxicated—let me retire.

Jenny. What can you have been about, this whole day?—

Morland. Walking—no, no,—only—

Jenny. Firſt it was buſineſs, now it is walking—Oh, brother!—brother!

Morland. Forgive me!—I really know not what I ſay!

Jenny. *(Aſide to Smith)* A dark ſhade in the picture of wedded happineſs!

Smith. What were light without ſhade?

Emilia. Will you go in, deareſt Morland?—Dinner waits.

Morland. Yes!—I—am ready!

SCENE VI.—*Enter* ALLBRAND.

Allbrand. Pardon me, that I come thus unexpectedly!—a very important piece of buſineſs brings me hither, my friend.

Jenny. Pſhaw!—again buſineſs?

Morland. Go, my love—go Jenny—ſit down to dinner,—we will be with you preſently.

Emilia. My dear Henry, I have provided your favourite diſh.

Morland. *(With conſtrained affection)* Thanks, deareſt Emilia!—go, depend upon ſeeing us in a few minutes.

Emilia. *(Aſide, as ſhe goes out ſlowly, and ſorrowfully)* All is not right!—What can have altered him thus!—

Jenny. *(Following her with Smith)* Smith! Smith!—if this example cannot deter?—

Smith. No over-haſty judgment, I entreat! *(Exeunt)*

SCENE

SCENE VII.—*Manent* ALLBRAND *and* MORLAND.

Morland. Allbrand, you too ſeem diſordered.
Allbrand. Oh, deeply!
Morland. New torments for me?
Allbrand. Alas!
Morland. Speak out!
Allbrand. At this moment I feel, for the firſt time in my life, that friendſhip may impoſe upon us moſt painful duties.
Morland. Truth is the firſt——
Allbrand. And moſt ſacred of all duties—I fulfil it with tears in my eyes, with a bleeding heart!—Morland, are you a man? — a heavy blow awaits you — the more ſevere as coming from a beloved hand.
Morland. From my wife's?
Allbrand. She is unworthy of that name.
Morland. Prove her ſo!
Allbrand. She holds nightly meetings with the Prince.
Morland. 'Tis falſe!
Allbrand. Who has felt more implicit confidence in her virtue than myſelf?—Who has defended her more eagerly, againſt all defamers, than myſelf?—My heart revolted at the idea of finding her guilty of infidelity towards her huſband—but——
Morland. I tell you, 'tis falſe!
Allbrand. So I aſſerted, as long as a poſſibility of doubt remained;—but when incontrovertible facts—
Morland. (*Stamping eagerly upon the ground*) By heaven, 'tis falſe!—Come to her—now—immediately—
Allbrand. Her tears,—her denial of guilt, will be no proofs of her innocence. Would you deprive yourſelf of the power of aſcertaining the truth?
Morland. And what *proofs* have you againſt her?
Allbrand. Emilia has, for ſome time paſt, quitted your houſe, every night.
Morland. (*Seizing him by the arm*) Allbrand!——
Allbrand. (*Proceeding calmly*) Stolen ſecretly acroſs the Caſtle-Square——

Morland. *(Seizing hold of him with both hands, and fixing his eyes upon him)* I aſk for proofs!

Allbrand. Into a very notorious houſe—

Morland. *(With his voice almoſt ſuffocated)* But, proofs! proofs!

Allbrand. And there met the Prince!

Morland. *(Seizing him by the breaſt)* Villain! thou lieſt!

Allbrand. Any thing may be excuſed to a friend in your ſituation.

Morland. Once more I ſay, your proofs?

Allbrand. Will you believe your own eyes?

Morland. And only my own eyes!

Allbrand. I will remain with you till midnight:—we will go together to the place; and you ſhall yourſelf be witneſs of ſhame!

Morland. I take you at your word.

Allbrand. But unarmed.

Morland. What time is it now?

Allbrand. Juſt nine o'clock.

Morland. Oh, God! ſo early!—ſo early!

Allbrand. Employ the interval in endeavouring to recover yourſelf;—a moment neglected never returns. Emilia's diſavowal of the fact could not remove ſuſpicion from your ſoul; and without the conviction I offer, you muſt lead a life of torment with a wife, whom you wiſh, yet dare not preſume to conſider, as innocent.

Morland. I am recovered.

Allbrand. It were better not to ſee her again before midnight;—ſhould her ſuſpicion be excited, ſhe will not go.

Morland. I ſwear, ſhe will not go!

Allbrand. I wiſh ſhe may not.

Morland. The ſlanderer ſhall anſwer this calumny with his life!

Allbrand. If Emilia be innocent?

Morland. She is innocent!

Allbrand. At leaſt was ſo once.

Morland. Come with me,—look her in the face,—and be aſhamed!

Allbrand. Lavater cannot decide in ſuch a caſe.

Morland. Name the perſon who has dared to calumniate her.

Allbrand. She is coming. For heaven's ſake do not betray yourſelf!

SCENE

SCENE VIII.—*Enter* EMILIA.

Emilia. Dear Morland, you have been abſent from home all day, let the evening be devoted to us!—We could not dine without you, we had no reliſh for a ſingle morſel! Is not your buſineſs yet concluded?—Mr. Secretary, will you partake of our humble fare?

Allbrand. I beg to be excuſed.

Emilia. If you will not encreaſe our little family circle, I hope, at leaſt, you will not, by detaining my huſband, contract it.

Allbrand. I do it reluctantly.

Emilia. Of what nature, can be that buſineſs which robs my dear Morland of his accuſtomed ſerenity?—my God, Henry, how you fix your eyes upon me!—deareſt huſband what can thus oppreſs you?

Morland. Do *you* wiſh to know?

Allbrand. 'Tis merely an unpleaſant circumſtance that has occurred in his office—nothing more.

Emilia. If it be nothing in which I can adviſe or aſſiſt him, yet tender participation in trouble is ſeldom unwelcome.

Morland. Do *you* intereſt yourſelf in my ſorrows?

Emilia. My God!—what a queſtion!

Morland. You look at me, ſo affectionately!

Emilia. And you look ſo wildly, at me.

Morland. Oh, you have not deſerved it!—I know you have not!

Emilia. Indeed, I have not!

Morland. By heaven, I am ſure of it! *(He claſps her to his breaſt)*

Allbrand. You forget our buſineſs.

Emilia. Your behaviour is ſo extraordinary!

Morland. My heart is unchanged!

Emilia. I hope ſo.

Morland. As your's!

Emilia. Then I will be content.

Allbrand. You will do better to ſeparate. Repoſe cannot

not be enjoyed, till our buſineſs be completed. I would adviſe locking ourſelves together into your ſtudy for to-night, and then by to-morrow's dawn, all may be finiſhed.

Emilia. The whole night, did you ſay?

Morland. Are you not pleaſed at it?

Emilia. I fear, leſt your health ſhould be injured!—you have ſlept ſo little for ſeveral weeks!

Morland. And you wiſh, that I ſhould ſleep?

Emilia. Oh, moſt ſincerely!

Morland. Indeed!

Emilia. Can you doubt it?

Allbrand. My friend, midnight approaches.

Morland. Midnight!—ha!—farewel Emilia!

Emilia. Shall we not ſee each other again, this evening?

Morland. I hope not.

Emilia. You *hope* not?

Morland. Forgive me!—I am abſent!—Come, Allbrand—good night, Emilia!

Emilia. Not one kiſs at parting?

Morland. (*Morland claſps her in his arms, violently agitated*) I hope it is not the laſt!

Emilia. God forbid!

Morland. (*Tearing himſelf from her*) No, it is not poſſible! (*He ruſhes into his ſtudy*)

Allbrand. (*To Emilia, as he follows Morland*) You will be ſo obliging, Madam, as to give orders that nobody interrupt us. (*Exit*)

SCENE IX.—EMILIA *alone.*

Something very extraordinary muſt have occurred; yet he will not impart it to me!—ſome heavy calamity overpowers him; and he will not let me ſhare it!—What can I have done to offend him?—Why am I, on a ſudden, thought unworthy of his confidence?

SCENE

SCENE X.—*Enter* JENNY.

Jenny. Are you alone, dear ſiſter?—where is my brother?

Emilia. In his ſtudy.—Allbrand and he have buſineſs together which will occupy them for the whole night.

Jenny. You have been weeping?

Emilia. Alas, yes!

Jenny. What has happened?

Emilia. Oh, I do not know!

Jenny. Has my brother been unkind to you?

Emilia. Not unkind!—Yet he is ſo unlike himſelf, that I ſcarcely know him.

Jenny. What can be the matter?

Emilia. Allbrand ſays, that it is merely ſome vexation of buſineſs.

Jenny. If ſo, you may be perfectly eaſy, and may reſt aſſured that all will ſoon be right again.

Emilia. I hope ſo!—I do not doubt it!—yet, 'tis impoſſible to deſcribe the anxiety I feel!—I would forbear to weep, but it is not in my power!

Jenny. *(Half aſide)* This is one of the happieſt unions I ever witneſſed!—yet, theſe ſorrows!—theſe tears!—

Emilia. Think you, I would exchange theſe ſorrows, theſe tears for your boaſted freedom?—No, Jenny!—Shall I have experienced unbounded happineſs for two years, and now ſhrink at the leaſt reverſe?—Ah, it is but a momentary reverſe, and theſe tears will ſoon be wiped away by the hand of love!

SCENE XI.—*Enter* SMITH.

Smith. Dear ladies, am I to dine by myſelf to-day?
Jenny. Yes!—for once!
Emilia. Alas!—I have no appetite for dinner.
Jenny. Nor I, neither.
Smith. And Mr. Morland?
Jenny. Is occupied with buſineſs.
Smith. You ſeem both very uneaſy—has any thing unpleaſant happened?
Emilia. Nothing!
Jenny. Nothing at all!
Smith. I will not be intruſive. (*Exit*)
Jenny. Shall I ſtay and keep you company?
Emilia. I had rather be alone.
Jenny. I have no inclination myſelf for company.—It is true that I have much to ſay to you; but the preſent is not a propitious moment for the communication. Good-night ſiſter.
Emilia. Good-night, dear Jenny.
Jenny. Will my harpſichord diſturb you?
Emilia. Oh, by no means.
Jenny. Mozart ſhall drive away the vapours. (*Exit*)

SCENE XII.—EMILIA *alone.*

Muſic will charm your mind to peace—I will endeavour to ſoothe mine by benevolence;—at poor Ellfield's I may perhaps forget, what occaſions me ſo much anxiety. And ſhall I go again without Morland's knowledge?—better at once tell him all!—but then, the pleaſure of preſenting my patients to him, on his birth-day, would be loſt!—beſides, at the preſent moment, it might appear obtruſive.
—Hiſt!

—Hiſt! I thought I heard my name mentioned in the ſtudy! —Yet, what concern can my name have with buſineſs?—Shall I?—No! ſhame on the idea!—far be from me the meanneſs of liſtening. But now, I dare not attempt ſpeaking to my huſband, ſince it will immediately appear as if I *had* liſtened. And why ſhould I be ſo deſirous of communicating the affair at this moment?—I ſhall not be miſſed,—and if I am, he knows me!—yet the diſcovery ſhall not be delayed beyond to-morrow!—all ſecrecy is pernicious; and I blame myſelf for having given way to it. I muſt take a ſhort time to recover myſelf; and then I will go.—Heaven grant, that when I ſee Morland, to-morrow, he may be more compoſed! (*Exit*)

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Street at Midnight.*

Enter PILZ *and a* CORPORAL *with* GUARDS.

PILZ.

MAKE no noiſe, Corporal! conceal yourſelf with your people; and when I give the alarm, be ready to come forth. (*The Corporal and Guards conceal themſelves—Pilz draws aſide the ſhade from his dark lantern, and looks at his watch*) Wants only a quarter of twelve—we ſhan't have long to wait!—For my part, I don't underſtand this buſineſs:—the wife plays falſe, and the huſband is to anſwer for it—I can't ſee much juſtice in that!—Well, well, 'tis no concern of mine; and good order muſt be preſerved!—Hiſt! I hear ſomebody coming! (*He conceals himſelf near the door of a houſe*)

SCENE II. — *Enter* SCHARFENECK, *diſguiſed in a large cloak.*

It muſt be hereabouts!—My direction is—near the door of the Court Apothecary's. (*He pants*) How I totter under the weight of this thick heavy cloak!—or is it the adventure that makes me quake?—I cannot ſay, I like it much

much; ſuſpect Allbrand to be over-reaching my uncle, —and me into the bargain. I have no objection at all to a frolic; but an act of deliberate villainy, goes againſt my conſcience!—For that, however, my employers muſt be reſponſible. (*He ſteps aſide*) I am to conceal myſelf here; but ſhould it be neceſſary to continue this game at hide and ſeek, longer than ten minutes, my patience will be exhauſted; and I ſhall take the liberty of returning home, and going quietly to bed.

SCENE III.—*Enter* ALLBRAND *and* MORLAND.

Allbrand. This is the place.

Morland. And that the houſe?

Allbrand. Yes, where you ſee a light in the upper room.

Morland. Oh, God! how my heart beats!

Allbrand. 'Tis an awful moment to an affectionate huſband.

Morland. The moſt awful that I ever experienced!—(*The clock ſtrikes twelve*)

Allbrand. The clock ſtrikes.

Morland. Each ſtroke is to me, like the knell of death.

Allbrand. Promiſe me, once more, to command yourſelf?

Morland. I cannot promiſe any thing.

Allbrand. Do not forget, that the Prince is at hand.

Morland. You pour oil upon the flame.

Allbrand. How eaſily, in the midſt of the confuſion, might he accompliſh any thing that ſuggeſted itſelf to his tyrannical mind?

Morland. Oh! that he would command his guards to diſpatch me, at the moment!—that were mercy indeed!

Allbrand. Do not ſpeak ſo loud!

Morland. Of what are you afraid?—Do you ſuppoſe that Emilia will hear us?—No! no!—Emilia will not come!

Allbrand. Heaven grant, ſhe may not.

Morland. Then, to-morrow, I throw myſelf at her feet,

and confeſs all!—No! this very night!—I will haſten to her bedſide, awaken her gently, and, with my tears and kiſſes, call forth a bluſh into thoſe cheeks which were never fluſhed by conſcious guilt.

Allbrand. Hark! I hear the ſound of approaching footſteps.

Morland. (*Trembling with agitation*) The ſteps of a female?

Allbrand. I ſhould think ſo.—But, for God's ſake be more calm!—how your teeth chatter!

Morland. Oh! my blood freezes. (*He ſteps aſide, trembling*)

SCENE IV.—EMILIA *croſſes the ſtage ſoftly, and hems when ſhe comes to the door of a ſmall houſe.* CAPTAIN ELLFIELD *opens the door.*

Ellfield. We have been expecting you, for ſome time, Madam.

Emilia. How is my good friend above?

Ellfield. I thank you, perfectly well. (*They go into the houſe, and ſhut the door*)

Allbrand. Did you ſee?

Morland. Almighty God!—it was ſhe herſelf.

Allbrand. Are you now convinced?

Morland. Scarcely, even now!

Allbrand. Whither will you go?

Morland. Can that be made a queſtion? (*He throws himſelf violently againſt the door of the houſe, into which he had ſeen Emilia enter*)

Allbrand. Yes, break in, there!

Pilz. (*Coming forwards*) Stop!—I arreſt you in the Prince's name!

Morland. (*Thunderſtruck*) How!

Pilz. Guards, come hither! (*The Guards ſurround Morland,—Allbrand gradually draws away from him*)

Morland. Do you know, who I am?

Pilz. The very perſon we ſeek.

Morland. This is too much!

Pilz. Follow me.

Morland.

Morland. Whither?

Pilz. Whither I am ordered to conduct you.

Morland. I muſt go into this houſe.

Pilz. Don't compel me to uſe force!

Morland. Oh, God of mercy! annihilate me, at this moment! (*He looks up, towards the window, where he ſees the light*) Infernal woman, hear me!—hear me, Emilia!—be thou accurſed for ever!—may ſome heavy judgment overtake thee, even in the arms of thy paramour!—may ye both be accurſed, both thou and thy ſeducer!—O-h-h—(*The Guards drag him out; his laſt words and groans are heard, after he diſappears*)

Allbrand. (*Coming forwards again*) Good heavens! how he raves!—Oh, that Pilz had but ſenſe enough to ſtop his mouth!—his clamours are ſufficient to alarm the whole ſtreet!

Scharfeneck. (*Coming from his concealment*) Allbrand!

Allbrand. I thank you for your punctuality.

Scharfeneck. I almoſt repent my engagement!

Allbrand. For what reaſon?

Scharfeneck. Who was the woman that ſtole in here?

Allbrand. Probably one of their aſſociates.

Scharfeneck. Why are not the whole crew apprehended?

Allbrand. All are not equally ripe for impriſonment.

Scharfeneck. What occaſioned Morland to curſe his wife ſo bitterly?

Allbrand. 'Twas temporary phrenzy.

Scharfeneck. I wiſh I were in my bed!—What more is to be done?

Allbrand. We muſt follow the Guards at a diſtance:—when Morland is delivered into ſafe cuſtody, Pilz ſhall accompany you to his houſe.

Scharfeneck. And then?

Allbrand. You know what—the papers—

Scharfeneck. Why not ſeize them yourſelf?

Allbrand. Becauſe I cannot be in different places at the ſame moment; and my preſence is more neceſſary elſewhere. Come along, now—I will give you farther inſtructions by the way. (*Exeunt*)

SCENE

SCENE V.—*A room in the State priſon.* KROLL *ſitting at a table, with his ſpectacles on, reading in a large folio volume.* EVE *ſpinning, and nodding her head frequently, over-powered with ſleep.*

Kroll. "Chapter the ſeventh," — "How Sultan Bajazet was confined by Tamerlane in an iron cage." — "It happened in the year one thouſand four hundred and two, that a bloody battle"——Why, Eve! you are aſleep.

Eve. No, no,—read on—I hear you.

Kroll. What was I reading about?

Eve. Something or other of the lame and blind.

Kroll. Right!—Bajazet was blind of one eye, and Tamerlane limped. But you are nodding again.

Eve. My eye-lids will fall down.

Kroll. I can't think, where the priſoner can be!—'Tis now paſt midnight.

Eve. I can't think, *who* he can be?

Kroll. Neighbour Pilz was very ſecret; I could not get a word out of him.

Eve. Well, we ſhall know in time.

Kroll. Truly, we ſhall, by virtue of our office. (*A knocking is heard; Kroll lays down his book, and takes off his ſpectacles*) Do you hear? they muſt be come! (*He goes out with the light*)

Eve. He has left me alone in the dark. For three whole years, have I now lived in this priſon; yet never with my own good will was left ſo many minutes together, without a light. It has entirely ſcared away my drowſineſs. —Hark!—how every ſtep they take, ſounds through the long paſſages!—The great hinges of the gate, creak diſmally!—the chains rattle—the gate bangs—terrible muſic for the poor man they are bringing amongſt us!—He certainly muſt be ſome great gentleman; for neighbour Pilz ordered the large room, with the tapeſtry hangings, to be prepared for him.

SCENE

SCENE VI.—*Re-enter* KROLL *with* PILZ *and* MORLAND.

Kroll. Heaven defend me, Mr. Syndicus! is it you?

Eve. Merciful powers, Mr. Syndicus! who could have thought of this?

Pilz. Come, come, neighbours; not ſo many words. (*Morland ſtands motionleſs, with his arms folded, and appears totally inſenſible to what paſſes*)

Kroll. Humph!—Humph!—I ſhould as ſoon have expected the ſkies to fall.

Eve. I am ſo terrified, that I cannot move a limb.

Pilz. Ah! 'tis a motley world.

Eve. This is not motley, neighbour; 'tis as black as a coal. Such a man as the Syndicus, the friend of all the poor in the town.

Kroll. Who endeavoured to procure every body their rights.

Eve. And always took notice of every child he met——

Pilz. But, it is his Highneſs's command.

Kroll. Well, to be ſure if it be his Highneſs—

Eve. Who knows what lies, wicked people may have told of the worthy gentleman?

Pilz. Neighbour Eve, take care of your tongue.

Eve. Why, to be ſure, God knows the prince is only a man.

Pilz. But a man favoured by God.

Kroll. That's for certain.

Pilz. Therefore, neighbour Kroll, in virtue of your office, here is a priſoner, for whom you are anſwerable.

Kroll. Locks and bars ſhall anſwer for him.

Pilz. And nobody muſt be admitted to ſee him.

Kroll. Very well.

Pilz. Good night, neighbour.

Kroll. Good night, Mr. Pilz. (*He conducts Pilz out*)

Eve. I ſhould like to know, how the good night is to come, when he has ſhut an honeſt man up in priſon?—For my part I hav'n't had any concern in it, — but what does

does that ſignify?—I know for certain, that I ſhan't cloſe my eyes all night. Poor dear gentleman! how terribly he looks!—Take heart, noble Syndicus, bad weather will overtake thoſe that are going to church as well as them that are running to the alehouſe, but where the heart and conſcience are warm, the clothes are ſoon dried. Alack-a-day! he neither ſees nor hears me!—Truly, I am only the ſimple wife of a poor citizen, and I don't know how to comfort ſuch a learned gentleman. *(Re-enter Kroll)* Look there, Benjamin,—our priſoner ſeems to have neither life nor motion,—he ſtares at the door, as if he ſaw ſomething. —Certainly no good will happen to us, if we don't look a little after him.

Kroll. Come, Mr. Syndicus, there's no occaſion to take this ſo much to heart!—many a great gentleman has been kept up here for a long time, and yet come off with honour at laſt.

Eve. We don't behave unkind to any body—they've commonly enough to bear, before they come to us; and we are glad to comfort them, if we can.

Kroll. This State priſon is not an iron cage.

Eve. Ah, Benjamin! 'tis juſt like talking to the wind!—

Kroll. *(Takes Morland reſpectfully by the arm)* Good Mr. Syndicus!

Morland. *(Starting wildly)* Who are you?—Where am I?—What would you have?

Kroll. Dear heaven! don't your honour know me?

Morland. *(Examining him from head to foot with an unmeaning ſtare)* I know nobody!—I know nobody!—

Eve. What!—has your honour forgotten—

Morland. Forgotten! *(Striking his hands on his forehead)* No! no!—I have not forgotten—

Kroll. Would not a glaſs of wine be of ſervice to you?—you ſhall have the beſt we can get.

Morland. Oh, a whole bottle!—a whole bottle!—Yes, yes, wine, good man!—wine!—wine!—happy he who can drown his feelings in wine!—

Eve. Leave him alone, Benjamin; he is not in his right mind.

Kroll. Won't you pleaſe to go to reſt?—Eve has prepared you a very good bed.

Morland. Ha! ha! ha!—Reſt!—Ha! ha! ha!—

Eve. To be ſure, your honour won't reſt ſo well as at home.

Morland. At home?

Eve. Ah, God!—how will poor Madam grieve!

Morland. (*Going up to her haſtily*) Woman! do you mean to mock me?

Eve. Oh, terrible!—to be ſure, he is out of his ſenſes!

Morland. Would to God!

(*A knocking is heard again at the gate.*)

Kroll. More knocking!—who can this be! (*Going*)

Eve. Take me with you, huſband!—I am afraid of being left alone with him! (*Exeunt Kroll and Eve*)

(*Morland ſtands motionleſs for ſome moments, then claſps his hands in agony;—he feels upon his finger a ring made of Emilia's hair; he looks at it wildly, then ſnatches it off, and throws it away indignantly, ſeizes himſelf by the breaſt, and exclaims*)

Morland. Oh, that I could thus eaſily tear *her* from my heart!

SCENE VII.—*Re-enter* KROLL *and* EVE, *with* ALLBRAND.

Kroll. (*As he enters*) If your Excellency have ſuch an order——

Allbrand. I take the reſponſibility ſolely upon myſelf!—leave us alone. (*Exeunt Kroll and Eve. Allbrand approaches Morland, who does not obſerve him: after a pauſe, he exclaims*) Is this the reward of love and patriotiſm?

Morland. What voice was that!—Allbrand!—you here?—you too in priſon?

Allbrand. In the cauſe of friendſhip, I even condeſcended to have recourſe to falſhood;—I uſed the Miniſter's name, and the doors were opened to me.

Morland. Not a priſoner, then?—But, why ſhould you be confined?—ſhe is not your wife!

Allbrand. Oh, my injured friend!

Morland. What ſeek you here?

Allbrand. To conſole you.

Morland. Is my houſe burnt down?—my whole property deſtroyed?—A beggar might be capable of receiving conſolation,—but not a fond and injured huſband!

Allbrand. I would give you advice, as a friend.

Morland. Give advice to a helpleſs wretch plunged into a whirlpool!—perhaps throw him a ſtraw at which to catch!

Allbrand. I might afford you ſome aſſiſtance.

Morland. Can the ruined honour of a wife be propped up like a mouldering building?—Can faith and truth be relumed, like an extinguiſhed light?

Allbrand. No!—but the man who has cheriſhed a ſerpent in his boſom, may throw it away; and then purſue his career with renovated powers.

Morland. Even though it had ſtruck its fangs into his heart, and the venom were poiſoning the very ſources of life!

Allbrand. Shall the infidelity of a perjured wife have power to deprive a Morland of every comfort, every ſatisfaction?—Has not nature endowed you, my friend, with eminent talents for advancing the welfare of your fellow-citizens?—Does not the noble mind often recover loſt repoſe in ſeeking to promote that happineſs in others, of which it is itſelf deprived?—May not diſſipation, activity——

Morland. In a priſon?—in chains?—Ha! ha! ha!—

Allbrand. Does the ſun ſhine only upon this little ſpot?—Shall this ſoil alone experience the beneficial effects of your ardour and induſtry?—Will not your native country receive back, with tranſport, into her boſom, a man whom for ſo many years ſhe herſelf nouriſhed and cheriſhed?

Morland. Oh, why did I ever quit ſo bleſſed a ſpot!

Allbrand. Away then, my friend; and at your pure Alpine ſprings drink oblivion to all your wrongs. Forget a wife who is unworthy of your love!—forget a country which repays your attachment with the baſeſt ingratitude,—but forget not a friend who loſes all recollection of himſelf, when he urges you to this ſeparation!

Morland. Shall innocence ſeek its ſafety in flight?—in concealment?

Allbrand.

Allbrand. Was not Socrates, though guiltleſs, condemned?—and did he not ſuffer becauſe he refuſed to ſhake off his chains.

Morland. Oh, my friend! you cheriſh the wildeſt viſions!—What means are left me for eſcape?

Allbrand. Be that my care.

Morland. Are you ſenſible, what you hazard?

Allbrand. Yes, I know what hazards I run, and for whom they are incurred.

Morland. Allbrand! Allbrand! thou haſt twined yet one more bond to faſten me to life!—thou haſt almoſt reconciled me again to the human race!—yet I cannot have recourſe to flight, and leave my honour a prey to all the goſſips and ſcandalous chronicles in the town. "*Morland is abſconded,*" it will be ſaid,—"*On what charge was he apprehended? and why did he fly? why ſhould he wiſh to eſcape from juſtice?*"—Do you ſuppoſe a ſingle mouth would be ſtopped by hearing, that I was guilty of no other crime than having a lovely wife?

Allbrand. Alas! no!—for the colours that are to varniſh over this injuſtice, are already prepared.

Morland. Indeed!—

Allbrand. You are accuſed of being a Jacobin.

Morland. Ha!—and the proofs?—

Allbrand. Not even your wife, as 'tis reported, could furniſh any thing like proofs.

Morland. Could not—but would have furniſhed them willingly? (*Allbrand ſhrugs his ſhoulders*) Conceal nothing, Allbrand,—one ſtab more or leſs is of little conſequence.

Allbrand. When I had ſomewhat recovered from my firſt aſtoniſhment at your apprehenſion——

Morland. Where were you at the moment?

Allbrand. Cloſe by you;—and when I ſaw you borne away, I was about to follow you down the ſtreet; but it ſoon occurred to me, that I might poſſibly render you more important ſervice, by ſeeking intelligence at the fountain-head. I was like one thunderſtruck:—of the true motives for this proceeding, I could not entertain a doubt; but I had no conception of the pretext that would be urged to ſanction it.

Morland. Well!—but my wife!—my wife!

Allbrand. I haſtened back to the Square, where I found

the Prince's Valet-de-chambre wrapped in a large cloak, and in waiting for his maſter's return.

Morland. Oh God!—Oh God!—the honour of my wife placed at the mercy of a Valet-de-chambre!

Allbrand. We had long known each other——

Morland. And he confided to you?—

Allbrand. The whole progreſs of the affair. Emilia withſtood his ſolicitations for a long time——

Morland. (*With an indignant ſneer*) Virtuous woman!

Allbrand. She wept, knelt—

Morland. Extremely affecting!

Allbrand. But, the Prince is young, handſome, engaging—

Morland. Perfectly natural!

Allbrand. And, perhaps, the idea of rank was too dazzling for the female imagination to reſiſt; ſince the Prince promiſed a patent of nobility for you.

Morland. He did me great honour.

Allbrand. And promotion at Court.

Morland. Indeed!—that certainly was irreſiſtible.

Allbrand. But by your own impetuoſity, you have ſtumbled upon the very threſhold.

Morland. Oh, I am a headſtrong fool!

Allbrand. You have done the Prince's work for him.—It was impoſſible, that he could ſeriouſly intend to permit your remaining ſo near;—he has long watched his opportunity—had his ſpies about, in all parts——

Morland. And at laſt caught me treſpaſſing upon his princely territories!—damn him!—damn him!—

Allbrand. Nor are his apprehenſions yet removed;—though a priſoner, he conſiders you as ſtill a formidable obſtacle to his views; and the Valet doubts whether you will be permitted to remain here. A removal to ſome more ſecure fortreſs, upon the frontiers, is talked of.

Morland. Ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha!—

Allbrand. Morland! Morland! my heart bleeds for you!—Should this threat be executed, you were loſt indeed!—Remote from every friend to conſole you, unknown, unpitied, branded by the mandate of the Prince himſelf, as a criminal—without even the poſſibility of communication by letter, with thoſe who might pour a balm into your wounded mind——

Morland.

Morland. The ſame God is every where!

Allbrand. No miracle will interpoſe to thwart the triumph of wickedneſs. Fly then, while it is yet in your power—my influence, my connections, may be of ſome ſervice in ſcreening you from purſuit—they can avail nothing, in caſe of your removal to a diſtant priſon.

Morland. I will appeal to the laws!—a hearing cannot be refuſed me!

Allbrand. To the laws!—Are you the firſt perſon who has been buried alive?—whoſe cries have in vain ſought to force their way to the ear of juſtice?—And what purpoſe would be anſwered, ſuppoſing you could obtain a hearing?—Is it not notorious to all the world, that you are innocent, but who will venture to pronounce you ſo, when the Prince's honour is involved in the eſtabliſhment of your guilt?—You are a foreigner; you have no relations, no connections, here, to concern themſelves in your fate.

Morland. Forſaken wretch that I am!—Oh, Emilia!—Emilia!—Yes, Allbrand, I can readily conceive that the mind, even of a virtuous woman, may be ſeduced by the allurements of ambition, by the blandiſhments of a voluptuary, till her honour becomes their ſacrifice—yet ſtill, ſhe has a heart!—Shame may, for a while, be ſilenced and put to flight; but, at length, it will return, ſtrew the bed of roſes with thorns, and change the ſmile of paſſion into convulſive diſtortions. Then will buſy recollection reproach her, that for two years her love had been my all,—that my heart, my life, had been devoted to the promotion of her happineſs—that I had ſacrificed every thing to my love—had known no joy without her—no ſorrow when ſhe was by my ſide!—Oh-h-h!

Allbrand. Morland, you rend my heart.

Morland. And can this wife wiſh my deſtruction!—

Allbrand. Whatever ſhe may do now, terror muſt ſoon compel her to wiſh it!—the dread leſt all her miſdeeds ſhould become known, and your juſt vengeance overtake her.

Morland. Oh, ſhe was ſo affectionate!—could ſhe ſee theſe cold drops that ſtand upon my forehead!——

Allbrand. She would hide the bluſh of ſhame in the boſom of her ſeducer.

Morland. Ha!—For the love of heaven, Allbrand, ſhake me!

me!—rouſe me!—that I may be awakened from this terrible dream!

Allbrand. Would to God, it were but a dream!—Did you ſee his Highneſs give her his hand at the houſe-door?

Morland. Was it indeed the Prince?

Allbrand. Nay, you muſt yourſelf have ſeen him.

Morland. I ſaw the figure of a man.

Allbrand. Of the Prince?

Morland. Damn him?—damn him!—

Allbrand. And did you not hear?——

Morland. I heard nothing!

Allbrand. Not the flatteries with which he received her—nor the burſt of laughter behind the door, when you were arreſted?

Morland. Laughter!—But it could be only the Prince who laughed!—I ſwear, by heaven, it could not be Emilia!

Allbrand. I might be miſtaken.

Morland. No, Allbrand, a beloved wife may be ſo loſt as to become criminal;—ſhe may diſgrace the name, and wring the heart of her injured huſband:—but could I ſuppoſe her capable of laughing, when ſhe beheld innocence and virtue trampled under foot—when ſhe ſaw that injured, deceived, huſband, thus made the victim.—O God!—O God!—See Allbrand!—(*He draws his hand out from his boſom, and ſhews it all bloody*)—fool!—fool!—I have torn my own fleſh through indignation.

Allbrand. Horrible, but juſt wrath!

Morland. Could ſhe ſee theſe bloody fingers——

Allbrand. Rouſe thyſelf, Morland!—Sue out a bill of divorce againſt the Syren!

Morland. No, death alone ſhall ſeparate us!—Yes, yes, ſhe is dead!—See, there ſhe lies!—I wring my hands over her corpſe!—Oh, God! aſſiſt me to believe in this illuſion!—Emilia dead, I can love her again;—How that thought conſoles me!—I can weep again!—(*Burſts into tears*)

Allbrand. One day will be ſufficient to prepare all things for your eſcape.

Morland. Allbrand, beſpeak me a ſuit of mourning.

Allbrand. Haſten to the arms of your aged father!—

Morland. A mourning ſuit, Allbrand!

Allbrand. Let your ſiſter be the companion of your flight.

Morland. A mourning ſuit for my deceaſed Emilia!

Allbrand. Morland, this is unmanly!—Will you waſte yourſelf to a ſhadow with fruitleſs ſorrow, while the ſorcereſs makes you her ſport in the arms of her paramour?

Morland. Her ſport!—No, Allbrand!—Emilia, though fallen, cannot make me her ſport.

Allbrand. Well, well, no matter!—In twenty-four hours, you will be upon the road to Baſil—then, and not till then, when the traitreſs finds that ſhe is not to enjoy her triumph in ſecurity, will ſhe be fully unmaſked. Write her a letter, Morland—a letter full of coldneſs and contempt—a mandate of eternal ſeparation.

Morland. Do you ſuppoſe, that the Prince's guards will convey a letter from me to Emilia?

Allbrand. I will carry it to her—will give it to her in the preſence of the Prince himſelf—ſtrike her with a look—

Morland. Will you, indeed?——

Allbrand. I give you my word of honour.

Morland. Well, then!

Allbrand. *(Calls)* Without there! *(Enter Kroll with Eve)* Bring pen and ink.

Kroll. I did not know that it was permitted——

Allbrand. I will be reſponſible.

Kroll. The next room is prepared for the Syndicus; and there you will find all conveniences——

Morland. I will be with you again directly. *(Kroll lights him to his room and returns)*

Allbrand. *(Aſide)* I have managed it at laſt, but with infinite trouble.

Eve. Poor gentleman!—for certain, he muſt be innocent.

Allbrand. 'Tis poſſible.

Eve. May one be allowed to aſk what crime he has committed?

Allbrand. That cannot be known for certain, it is a State ſecret;—various reports are circulated.

Eve. Heaven will bring his innocence to light.

Allbrand. That might be poſſible, if heaven and he were upon better terms.

Eve.

Eve. I don't underſtand what your honour means.

Allbrand. Strange things are reported of him—I cannot poſitively ſay, that they are true;—but certain it is, that I never ſaw him at church.

Eve. But ſtill, I am ſure he would not——

Allbrand. 'Tis impoſſible to ſay!—bad company is contagious!—wicked books, and evil examples, have great influence.

Eve. Heaven forbid!

Allbrand. Thus far I know from his own mouth,—that he does not believe in a devil.

Kroll. Not believe in a devil!—Eve, what d'ye think now?

Allbrand. And the Prince is extremely pious.

Kroll. To be ſure, he is.—Well, well, his Highneſs has done quite right.

Allbrand. You ſee, my friends, that your compaſſion is miſplaced.

Eve. Compaſſion, indeed!—I ſay compaſſion to a man who does not believe in a devil!

Kroll. 'Tis hard enough, that we are obliged to be under the ſame roof with him.

Allbrand. Should he attempt to converſe with you, I would adviſe you to be ſhort in your anſwers.

Kroll. You need not make yourſelf uneaſy about that.

Allbrand. No one, beſide myſelf, muſt be allowed to ſpeak with him.

Kroll. Nobody but Satan.—God forgive me the word.

Allbrand. Leaſt of all, his wife.—And, do you hear,—I again caution you againſt throwing yourſelves too much in his way—a ſmooth tongue might cajole you.

Eve. He could not ſhake my faith. But the children, Benjamin,—he might do them a miſchief.—We had beſt take care and keep the children out of his way.

Kroll. I will put a padlock upon his door.

Eve. No, no, I cannot pity him any longer. I thought he might have committed ſome offence againſt his Highneſs, ſuch as embezzling money entruſted to him, or ſome ſuch matter;—for ſuch things will happen, even to the moſt pious. But not to believe in a devil!!!——

SCENE

SCENE VIII.—MORLAND *returns with a letter in his hand, which he gives to* ALLBRAND.

Morland. Take it!

Allbrand. *(Makes a ſign to Kroll and Eve, who retire, when he unfolds the letter and reads it to himſelf)* 'Tis too wild!—too empaſſioned!—colder contempt had been better!—this anger will gratify her. However, *(Putting the letter into his pocket, and ſpeaking aſide)* What the writer has omitted, the meſſenger will ſupply.

Morland. *(Seizing his arm eagerly)* Allbrand, ſhould we at laſt be miſtaken?—ſhould ſhe be innocent?—ſhe might not ſurvive the receipt of ſuch a letter.

Allbrand. Innocent!

Morland. Yes, yes, I am a fool!—I am indeed a fool!—Did we not both ſee?—Ah, no!—*I* ſaw only her.

Allbrand. *I* ſaw, and heard, the Prince.

Morland. Are you very ſure that you were not miſtaken?—Our ſenſes will ſometimes deceive us—inſtances have occurred—

Allbrand. I was a cool ſpectator—

Morland. But in the darkneſs of night, you might be miſled—

Allbrand. The moon ſhone bright.

Morland. Oh, too true!—too true!—and to attempt to explain away the whole affair by ſuppoſing it accident?—

Allbrand. Appears to me perfectly ridiculous.

Morland. So it is!—ſo it is!—Take the letter then!—yet hold!—No! no!—Allbrand, I think Emilia cannot poſſibly be innocent!

Allbrand. Certainly not!

Morland. Might not the Prince by chance?—No, that could ſcarcely be!—and what then could Emilia want?—to whom could ſhe go?—Oh, ſhe is guilty!—ſhe is guilty!—every bond between us is broken—Take the letter, Allbrand;—take it to her, paint to her my ſufferings!—carry her my everlaſting curſe!—Yet! no! no! no!—for God's

ſake—ſhe is pregnant!—Allbrand, ſhe is pregnant!—give me back the letter!

Allbrand. You aſtoniſh me, Morland!—But ſince you are incapable of acting for yourſelf, I muſt think, and act for you.—I muſt, and will ſave you. Recollect, that for four years paſt, a diſhonourable tie has chained Emilia to the Prince!—do you ſuppoſe, that ſhe would have forſaken the father of her child?

Morland. You ſuggeſt horrors.

Allbrand. Will you ſubmit to be reputed the father of a child not your own?

Morland. Oh God!—you drain the laſt drop of blood from my heart!

Allbrand. Will you condeſcend to be made the laughing-ſtock of the whole country?

Morland. Ha!—revenge!—revenge!

Allbrand. Rather ſhew contempt. It is the part of injured worth to deſpiſe,—revenge muſt be left to conſcience.

Morland. Do you expect to find a conſcience where virtue and love have been ſo long diſſembled?

Allbrand. It cannot be enveloped in ſo thick a ſhell, but that the worm of remorſe will gnaw through to it at laſt.

Morland. And when that moment ſhall arrive,—when the couch of voluptuouſneſs ſhall be exchanged for the bed of death,—when the criminal ſhall ſeek in vain for reſt, upon the ſofteſt pillow of down—when the windows of her chamber muſt be darkened, that no ray of light may ſtrike upon her languid eyes—when her taſte ſhall be inſenſible, even to the choiceſt wines from the Prince's cellar—when no cooling medicine ſhall have power to aſſuage the fever burning in her veins—when hired nurſes are ſlumbering by her bed-ſide, inſenſible to her faint groans, to the ſcene of wretchedneſs before them!—then ſhall my form, juſt viſible by the duſky glimmering of the midnight lamp, undraw her curtain—grin horribly at her with a ghaſtly ſmile, nod, menace, and vaniſh!—away!—away, with the letter!

Allbrand. Recover yourſelf, my friend; I go. The Prince ſhall hear harſh truths from me!—truth is the ſevereſt chaſtiſement that can be given to a Prince. *(He is going, when Kroll enters, takes a light and accompanies him out.)*

SCENE

SCENE IX.—MORLAND *alone. He pauſes, looking after* ALLBRAND.

He is gone!—and what now am I?—Thus are all bonds that held me to the world, torn aſunder, the bond of life alone excepted, and that can only be diſſolved by a tedious ſeries of excruciating torments!—yet, why await this lingering proceſs?—down, down, with thee inſtantly to the grave, Morland, ſince thou haſt no more to hope from man, ſave a handful of earth to cover thy bones!

SCENE X.—*Re-enter* KROLL, *with* EVE.

Kroll. Will the gentleman be ſo good as to take himſelf to his chamber—this here is mine.

Eve. We have been kept up almoſt the whole night, entirely upon the gentleman's account.

Morland. Pardon me, good people!

Kroll. Nay, the Lord pardon thee!

Eve. (*With a pious ſigh*) And lead every one who is going aſtray, into the right road!

Morland. (*Half aſide*) When only ſtraying out of the right road, it is poſſible to be reſcued; but when fallen into the abyſs, nothing remains but to look down, and drop a tear upon the poor wretch who lies daſhed to pieces below.—But you do not underſtand me!—Good night! (*Exit into his room*)

Kroll. (*Locking and barring the door of Morland's chamber*) Yes, yes, we underſtand you very well!

Eve. Did you hear how he talked about the Abyſs?

Kroll. Of hell, I ſuppoſe.

Eve. Ah dear heaven!

Kroll. Come wife,—come to bed.

Eve. He who does not believe in a devil, moſt likely does not believe in the good angels!—how can he ever ſleep quietly in his bed! (*Exeunt*)

SCENE XI.—*A room in* MORLAND'S *houſe.* THOMAS *ſitting aſleep in a chair,—a table ſtanding by him, on which is a candle almoſt burnt out, and a watch. He ſtarts from his ſleep, rubs his eyes, and then riſes.*

Three o'clock!—I don't know what to make of this!—he never uſed to be out ſo late!—I am afraid ſome misfortune has happened!—I would fain have gone with him, he looked ſo troubled in mind, but he ordered me to remain here. I am never quite eaſy at being alone;—when two people are left together, they can have a little chat, and that paſſes time away. Our good lady muſt not be told of this,—for ſhe'd fret herſelf to death; but I think I might wake Miſs Jenny; and perhaps ſhe knows more about the matter than I do.—I wonder, whether ſhe would take it amiſs?—I watched many a night upon her account, when ſhe had the ſmall-pox; and ſurely ſhe can't think much of coming for once to comfort poor old Thomas?—Yes, I'll—I'll e'en venture it—and if ſhe ſhould be angry, I muſt tell her that "*neceſſity has no law.*" (*He taps at the door*) Madam!—Miſs Jenny!—She is young and ſleeps ſound!—(*He taps again*) Miſs Jenny!

Jenny. (*Within*) Who knocks?

Thomas. Only old Thomas.

Jenny. What do you want?

Thomas. I want to know what is become of my maſter?—Pray, don't be angry, Madam, it is now three o'clock, and I could not any longer reſtrain my uneaſineſs! (*A violent knocking is heard at the door.*) Zounds!—there he comes!—well, thank God!—thank God!—I might as well have let the young lady ſleep on quietly. (*Exit.*)

SCENE XII.—JENNY *enters from her room in a morning dreſs haſtily ſlipped on.*

What can this mean?—why was I waked?—is there a fire in the neighbourhood?—The old man firſt frightened

me from my ſleep, and then ran away!—What a noiſe there is upon the ſtair-caſe!—Who can be coming hither at this time of night?

SCENE XIII.—*Enter* SCHARFENECK, PILZ, *and* THOMAS.

Scharfeneck. (*To Thomas*) Away fool!—you will ſoon learn what we want! (*Seeing Jenny*) Fair lady, reluctantly as I undertook a commiſſion which might diſturb your reſt, yet the ſight of you baniſhes repentance.

Jenny. I do not underſtand you, Sir.

Scharfeneck. By command of his Highneſs, I come to ſeize your brother's papers.

Jenny. You cannot be ſerious.

Scharfeneck. (*Pointing to Pilz*) The ſolemn ſeverity of my companion's countenance muſt preclude all idea of joking.

Jenny. My God! what can this mean?

Scharfeneck. A trifle!—only a little conſpiracy!—a ſnug piece of treaſon againſt the State;—no feminine concern, for there is not any love in the caſe. But I forget that my company was always diſagreeable to you;—permit me, therefore, to proceed with all expedition, in the fulfilment of his Highneſs's commands.

Jenny. Still, I do not underſtand you, Sir; and it were better that I awaken my brother.

Scharfeneck. I ſhould think he can hardly be aſleep, ſince it is he who has awakened us; and a priſon does not furniſh very propitious quarters, for the enjoyment of repoſe.

Jenny. What do you mean?—my brother——

Scharfeneck. Has ſpent the laſt half hour in the State priſon.

Thomas. (*Claſping his hands together*) My God!

Jenny. Heavens!—on what charge?

Scharfeneck. That he wanted to introduce into the State, what is only admiſſible in love,—liberty—and equality.

Jenny.

Jenny Infamous ſlander!

Scharfeneck. Then you have the leſs to apprehend from the examination of his papers.—Come, Pilz, to your buſineſs.

Jenny. Sir, I cannot ſuffer——

Scharfeneck. I am heartily ſorry, Madam, that I muſt now, for the firſt time in my life, diſregard the interdict of a fair lady.

Thomas. (*Half aſide to Jenny, ſcarcely able to reſtrain his indignation*) Madam, ſhall I call the coachman and groom?

Jenny. Be quiet, Thomas. (*To Scharfeneck*) Sir, I require to ſee a written order.

Scharfeneck. You know, Madam, that I have the honour of being in the Prince's ſervice; this officer of the police, and the guards below in the hall, muſt ſufficiently prove that I obey the higheſt commands. How much rather had I come hither without this formidable train, only upon an adventure of gallantry?—But your ſeverity——

Jenny. Matchleſs impudence!

Thomas (*Muttering to himſelf*) Impudence, indeed!

Scharfeneck. (*To Jenny*) You were ſpeaking of your ſervant, I ſuppoſe?

Thomas. He never was impudent.

Scharfeneck. Fellow!——

Thomas. Sir, I would have you to know that I am a Swiſs, a free man.

Scharfeneck. Ha! ha! ha!—And ſo you alſo are playing that part.

Jenny. Be ſilent, Thomas;—Go and call my ſiſter-in-law.

Thomas. (*Going reluctantly, and muttering to himſelf*) When people break into the houſe at dead of night, I know that in my country—— (*Exit*)

Scharfeneck. I have waited too long.—As far as I remember, this is Mr. Morland's ſtudy—Pilz, follow me.

Jenny. For your own juſtification, Sir——

Scharfeneck. May I requeſt the key of your brother's deſk?

Jenny. He always carries that about him.

Scharfeneck. Then we muſt manage without a key.

Jenny. Sir, I warn you that the Prince ſhall know at day-break——

Scharfeneck.

Scharfeneck. Unfortunate that I am, to be compelled to give the warnings of a fair lady to the wind. (*He goes into Morland's ſtudy, followed by Pilz, carrying a lantern*)

SCENE XIV.—JENNY, *alone. Afterwards,* THOMAS.

Jenny. I tremble!—I know not what to do!—How will my poor ſiſter-in-law be ſhocked and terrified!—What fatal conſequences may not be apprehended!

Thomas. (*Entering in haſte and terror*) New troubles! —new ſorrows!—

Jenny. Good heavens!—what?—

Thomas. Our good lady is gone too!

Jenny. Impoſſible!

Thomas. Has never been in bed. Mary ſtole into her room, juſt opened her curtains, and called, ſoftly, "Madam!"—No anſwer!—She tapped with her hand upon the bed—all cold!—At laſt, ſhe fetched the lamp and looked —nothing to be ſeen!—nothing to be heard!

Jenny. Oh, God! what can be the meaning of this!

Thomas. She is moſt likely with my maſter.

Jenny. How can ſhe have learned——

Thomas. Who knows?—She had perhaps a kind of a miſgiving.—Such things often happen among people that love each other ſo very dearly.

Jenny. Then I am left quite alone!

Thomas. Don't be frightened, Madam,—old Thomas is here, and the good God is here; and if you would but let me call the Coachman and the Groom, we'd ſoon clear the houſe.

Jenny. Go, Thomas, and call Mr. Smith.

Thomas. Zounds! if I had not forgotten Mr. Smith! (*Exit*)

Jenny. Proper, or improper, I muſt ſend for him;—in times of diſtreſs, we concern ourſelves little about propriety.

SCENE

SCENE XV. — *Enter* SCHARFENECK *and* PILZ *with the papers.*

Scharfeneck. My errand is accompliſhed: —once more I entreat your pardon, Madam, and heartily wiſh you pleaſant morning ſlumbers.

Jenny. Yet another moment, Sir! — My brother's clerk will be here inſtantly, and I muſt requeſt of you to tell him what papers ———

Scharfeneck. All, Madam!—every ſcrap!—I am not fond of ſelections.

Jenny. He is a man of buſineſs, and will know what ſhould be granted, what refuſed.

Scharfeneck. As to what concerns the papers, Madam, there is nothing either to grant, or to refuſe; I muſt take them all. What elſe the clerk may grant or refuſe here, I am too modeſt to enquire.

Jenny. At leaſt, I think, you might reſpect misfortune.

Scharfeneck. I reſpect the rights of beauty, and ſhould be perfectly inconſolable were a longer interruption of your reſt to endanger the making thoſe lovely cheeks pale.—Come, Pilz, I fear we are intruders here. (*Exit with a low ſarcaſtic bow, and followed by Pilz*)

Jenny. (*Burſting into tears*) Why do I weep?—Why at ſuch a moment, beſtow one thought upon an inſult that concerns myſelf alone?—This is not a time to waſte in fruitleſs lamentations!—My poor brother!—my poor Emilia!—Oh that I were not a woman!—but my ſex ſhall not withhold me!—I will go directly to the Prince.

SCENE XVI.—*Enter* SMITH.

Smith. Thomas tells me ſtrange things.

Jenny. Give me your advice, your aſſiſtance, dear Smith.

Smith.

Smith. Mr. Morland, a priſoner,—his papers ſeized,—your ſiſter-in-law not to be found!—

Jenny. 'Tis all but too true.

Smith. This is a curſed country.

Jenny. What ſhall we do?

Smith. Go to England, and live in freedom.

Jenny. But, at preſent—

Smith. We muſt patiently wait the approach of day.

Jenny. And then?—

Smith. I do not doubt of being able to procure your brother's releaſe.

Jenny. But how?

Smith. (*After conſidering for a few minutes*) Yes, I muſt ſpeak.—My deareſt Madam, many a book may be found in the world, which, though ſhabby to the eye from being uncut and unbound, will by its innate worth attract attention from the man of underſtanding, though it may be ſcorned by the coxcomb on account of its homely garb. Such a book is Honeſty in the heart of a citizen, and Innocence in a plain coat; both are the jeſt of the valets in the anti-chamber.

Jenny. Is that, any ſource of conſolation to me?

Smith. By no means—I rather made the obſervation, to prove that your brother is loſt, becauſe, though his virtue is of ſterling worth, the buckles in his ſhoes are not of equal value.—With Courtiers, the caſe is the very reverſe.

Jenny, Heavens!—Is this a moment for ſuch remarks?

Smith. The preciſe moment for them. You think me, perhaps, cold, unfeeling to your diſtreſſes—but you miſtake—I am only compoſed through habit—becauſe I have witneſſed the like an hundred times. Man poſſeſſes the noble faculty of being able to habituate himſelf to any thing, ſave exceſs of happineſs.

Jenny. And whither do theſe obſervations tend?

Smith. To confeſſing that I feel myſelf reduced to the unpleaſant neceſſity of uſing baſer coin, where nobility of ſoul will not paſs as currency. I will go to the Miniſter, announce myſelf as Lord Sidney———

Jenny. Smith, are you awake?

Smith. I will preſent him with a letter of recommendation from our Miniſter; nor do I doubt that the Lord

will obtain a hearing, when the humble clerk would be ſpurned.

Jenny. Smith, do you ſpeak ſeriouſly?

Smith. Moſt ſeriouſly, deareſt Madam. Influenced by love, the eccentric being you behold, laid aſide his rank, till he could fully aſſure himſelf, whether a Lord was of more account in your eſtimation, than an honeſt man.

Jenny. I am aſtoniſhed!

Smith. Why aſtoniſhed?—Love and caprice have frequently wrought changes even more extraordinary.

Jenny. My Lord ———

Smith. Oh, no!—My Lord will go to reſcue your brother; but Edward Smith will return hither to ſolicit your hand. I have a fine eſtate in Warwickſhire, a true Swiſs country, which wants nothing to render it a complete Paradiſe, but thoſe delightful inhabitants Love and Liberty. What think you, Madam?—I now rejoice, that I am rich; ſince I have enough for us all—enough to ſupport us all happily together.

Jenny. I am incapable at preſent of making any reply to offers ſo generous.

Smith. You will never meet with one whoſe intentions are more honourable.

Jenny. Shall neceſſity grant what love aſks?

Smith. Nobly urged!—I will therefore be ſilent, nor ſolicit you farther. Repentance is every where an evil gueſt; and if it enter the abode of Love, is too apt to deſtroy its hoſt.—But the day begins to dawn—I will haſten to the Miniſter.

Jenny. And I, to my poor brother's priſon.

Smith. Allow me to take your hand, Madam! (*He preſſes her hand tenderly to his lips*)—I am not accuſtomed to uſe many words; but God, who knows my heart, knows that I love you! (*Exit*)

Jenny. I am quite overpowered!—I could weep like a child!—Fye! fye! Jenny,—lay aſide the woman, and think only of thy brother!—Gold will procure thee acceſs to him, ſooner than tears. (*Exit*)

SCENE

SCENE XVII.—CAPTAIN ELLFIELD's *Lodging.* *The* CAPTAIN, *Mrs.* ELLFIELD, *and* EMILIA, *diſcovered.*

Emilia. I rejoice indeed, Madam, to find you thus. Appetite and ſleep, are the moſt infallible ſymptoms of returning health; and, thanks be to God, for ſome days paſt, you ſeem to have amended very rapidly;—but you muſt ſtill be careful.

Ellfield. I urge the ſame to her every day.

Mrs. Ellfield. The weather was ſo fine—

Emilia. But the air was cool.

Mrs. Ellfield. Indeed, the walk has been of great ſervice to me. The freſh air, the benign rays of the ſun, gave me new life.—I ſeemed to inhale ſtrength with every breeze.

Emilia. But you ſhould have gone early to bed.

Ellfield. I would fain have perſuaded her to that.

Mrs. Ellfield. I ſlept, for ſome hours, upon the ſopha; and I could not refuſe myſelf the pleaſure of receiving my benefactreſs.

Emilia. If I have deſerved this name, I am richly repaid. I leave you for the firſt time, with ſatisfaction;—it grows late. *(She puts on her cloak)* I cannot now determine, when we ſhall meet again.

Ellfield. Will you not allow two grateful hearts to pay their reſpects to you in your own houſe?

Emilia. Then, I muſt tell you who I am, and where I live.

Ellfield. Is it not cruel, to conceal it from us any longer?

Emilia. Dear Captain, allow me to follow my own humour. In a week, I will receive you, when I ſhall introduce another perſon to your acquaintance.

Ellfield. But how, if the veil of this amiable modeſty have not proved ſufficiently thick, to conceal you from the penetrating eyes of gratitude?—How, if your name be already known to us?

Emilia. Impoſſible!—unleſs you have broken your faith.

Mrs. Ellfield. Our faith has been inviolably obſerved.

Emilia. You ſurely cannot have watched me home?

Ellfield. No, upon my honour.

Emilia. Then you cannot know my name.

Ellfield. The name of Morland can never be eraſed from our hearts.

Emilia. (With aſtoniſhment) Ha! — indeed, you do know me!—Oh, ſay how has this happened?—by what means have you gueſſed my ſecret?

Ellfield. If you will truſt to my word of honour, that the information was unſought by us; I would rather bury in oblivion a hateful circumſtance ———

Emilia. You but increaſe my curioſity;—I am certain that my ſecret is not known to any one in my own houſe.

Ellfield. Are you equally certain that you have never been watched?

Emilia. How!—

SCENE XVIII.—*Enter* ALLBRAND.

Ellfield. Ha!—you here again!

Emilia. Secretary Allbrand!—I am aſtoniſhed!—What can bring you hither?

Ellfield. Yes, Sir!—I deſire to know your errand?

Allbrand. I can ſcarely recover breath. Pardon this unſeaſonable viſit!—*(To Emilia)* I muſt entreat, Madam, for a few minutes, private converſation with you.

Emilia. With me?

Allbrand. (To Ellfield) Sir, I conjure you, if you poſſeſs the feelings of humanity, to allow me a few minutes alone with this lady.

Ellfield. Not, unleſs it be her deſire.

Emilia. What can you have to ſay in private to me?

Allbrand. Oh, for heaven's ſake, do not delay a moment! — time is precious.

Emilia. If I alone am concerned, I have no ſecrets from theſe good people.

Allbrand. My buſineſs concerns your huſband.

Emilia.

Emilia. (*With a look of ſuſpicion*) Indeed Well, a lie can avail you little—a few moments, my friends—but do not go far.

Ellfield. We ſhall remain in the next room. (*Exit with Mrs. Ellfield*)

SCENE XIX.—ALLBRAND *and* EMILIA.

Emilia. Now, what is your buſineſs?

Allbrand. Alas! that I muſt be the meſſenger of ill news!

Emilia. Ill news!—but go on!—we know each other already!—What is your news?

Allbrand. My friend, your huſband——

Emilia. Do you ſeek to lead my ſenſes aſtray through terror?

Allbrand. What mortifying diſtruſt!

Emilia. Speak out at once!—What has happened to your friend, as you are pleaſed to call him?

Allbrand. You ſeem extremely compoſed, Madam.

Emilia. My nerves are not weak, Mr. Secretary;—I do not faint away, at a ſpider's crawling about my neck.

Allbrand. Do I deſerve to be treated with ſuch ſcorn?

Emilia. Aſk that queſtion of yourſelf.

Allbrand. I only entreat you to forget at this moment, the errors of love, and to liſten ſolely to the voice of friendſhip!

Emilia. I am all attention.

Allbrand. Your huſband is at this moment in cloſe confinement in the State priſon.

Emilia. (*Diſdainfully*) Indeed!

Allbrand. He is accuſed of exciting ſedition.

Emilia. Really!

Allbrand. His papers are ſeized.

Emilia. And of what uſe do you ſuppoſe this ſtory can be to you?

Allbrand. You do not then believe it?

Emilia. I certainly do not.

Allbrand. Would to God, that this were the worſt part of my information.

Emilia.

Emilia. The worſt part!—what more have you to relate?—let me hear all!

Allbrand. Whether Morland be guiltleſs or not of the State crimes imputed to him, I ſhall not now enquire—but——

Emilia. No enquiry is neceſſary.

Allbrand. But that he is criminal towards his wife, will not admit of a doubt.

Emilia. Towards me!—Well, to what extent?

Allbrand. Muſt he believe you acceſſary to his arreſt, only becauſe you prudently concealed from him ſome former tranſactions——

Emilia. (*Starting*) Former tranſactions?——

Allbrand. Could not he who knows you ſo well, give you credit for the purity of your motives?——

Emilia. Morland knows then—

Allbrand. That you once received certain offers from the Prince—

Emilia. Well?

Allbrand. And he aſſerts, that he has poſitive evidence of the continuance of this connection.

Emilia. (*With dignity*) Sir, there never was any *connection* between me and the Prince.

Allbrand. Who is more firmly convinced of that than myſelf?—but Morland—

Emilia. Has ſome evil dæmon poſſeſſed him?

Allbrand. Unworthy of your tender and faithful affection, he even threatens a ſeparation.

Emilia. A ſeparation!—from me!—

Allbrand. He forgets, that the indignation of a virtuous woman, who feels herſelf injured, burns moſt fiercely amid the aſhes of extinguiſhed love.

Emilia. Secretary Allbrand, I deſire you to forbear breathing forth your poiſonous exhalations, and to ſpeak more plainly,—for, by Heaven, I do not underſtand you.

Allbrand. He has diſcovered your nightly viſits to this houſe.

Emilia. Diſhonour light upon the head of him who betrayed them!

Allbrand. And he believes his honour injured—

Emilia. He knows me!—

Allbrand. He ought to know you!—his ſuſpicions therefore are the more unpardonable; his determination never to ſee you again, the more horrible.

Emilia.

Emilia. Hence from my ſight, liar!

Allbrand. Would to Heaven I were a liar!

Emilia. Allbrand, if there be any thing in the world, that you eſteem ſacred, ſwear by it!—

Allbrand. I ſwear by your virtue.

Emilia. Villain, dare not thus to profane my virtue!—Fool that I am!—Why do I ſtand here patiently liſtening to that baleful tongue, when in a few moments I might be in Morland's arms, and then would this whole ſcene of villainy be expoſed. *(Going.)*

Allbrand. Whither would you go, unhappy woman?—Morland languiſhes in priſon; he cannot ſee you; and if he could, he will not.

Emilia. Allbrand, what can be your aim in all this?—Do you ſeek to lead my ſenſes aſtray by theſe horrible falſhoods?

Allbrand. What end could I propoſe in uttering falſhoods which muſt be detected the moment you entered your own houſe?

Emilia. Muſt I then, indeed, believe Morland to be a priſoner?

Allbrand. Yet be compoſed, and do not therefore conſider yourſelf as deſerted.—A friend ſtill remains to you, one who can forget unmerited humiliations—

Emilia. And muſt I alſo believe that Morland intends to ſeparate himſelf from me?—Oh, God!—Oh, God!

Allbrand. Inſulted Virtue, ſummon thy elder brother, Pride, to thy ſupport!

Emilia. Man, what haſt thou done?

Allbrand. What have *I* done?

Emilia. Thou alone wert capable of ſpinning ſuch an infernal web!—Dæmon, what haſt thou done?

Allbrand. Theſe injurious ſuſpicions, Madam—

Emilia. But do not exult too ſoon!—the Prince ſhall give back a citizen to the State—love ſhall reſtore a huſband to my arms.

Allbrand. What dependence is to be placed on that love, this letter will inform you.

Emilia. God of Heaven!—my huſband's hand!—*(She ſnatches open the letter—reads it—drops it from her hand—ſtaggers—ſinks on her knee—utters a loud ſhriek, and faints)*

Allbrand. Have I ſubdued thy ſpirit at laſt!—oh, ſweet, ſweet revenge!—*(Exit haſtily, caſting a malignant look upon Emilia as he goes out)*

SCENE

SCENE XX.—CAPTAIN *and* MRS. ELLFIELD *ruſh in.*

Ellfield. What is the matter!

Mrs. Ellfield. Merciful heaven! what do I ſee?

Ellfield. Our benefactreſs!—*(They raiſe Emilia up and place her in a chair)* What can have become of the villain? *(He ſupports Emilia)*

Mrs. Ellfield. *(Seeing the letter upon the ground, takes it up and reads it)* May I believe my eyes?—can this be poſſible?—read!—

Ellfield. *(After reading the letter)* Is this the reſult of her benevolent viſits to us?

Mrs. Ellfield. That ſhe ſhould incur ſuch a horrible ſuſpicion!

Ellfield. That ſhe ſhould be ſuppoſed here—

Mrs. Ellfield. In a houſe of ſuch a deſcription—

Ellfield. Oh, God!—my honour!—

Mrs. Ellfield. Think, dear Charles, on all her kindneſs;—to her alone are we indebted that you have ſtill a wife—haſten, haſten, then, to Morland's priſon; a ſingle word may develope this ſcandalous impoſition!—No, I will go myſelf—where is my cloak—

Ellfield. Deareſt Caroline, you would not—

Mrs. Ellfield. Shall we repay her angelic benevolence by remaining cold ſpectators of miſery endured for our ſakes?

Ellfield. But ſhould admittance be refuſed?—

Mrs. Ellfield. I will haſten to the Miniſter—his palace ſhall reſound with my cries and lamentations, till they reach his ears.—My countenance of anguiſh will awaken the compaſſion even of courtiers, my convulſive agonies irreſiſtibly ſeize their attention. I am certain I ſhall gain admittance.

Ellfield. But, you are ill and weak.

Mrs. Ellfield. Oh, no!—never did I feel myſelf ſtronger.

Ellfield. Let me go, I entreat.

Mrs. Ellfield. No, remain here to conſole her,—of that I am incapable.

Ellfield. Dear Caroline, you will be too much agitated—

Mrs. Ellfield. To ſee her agonies, when ſhe firſt recovers, would agitate me ſtill more;—and to bring back a miſguided huſband into the arms of a faithful wife, would be the moſt powerful cordial I could experience. (*She puts on her cloak*) Conſole our unfortunate friend, my Charles, I ſhall ſoon return.—Heaven proſper my efforts! (*Exit haſtily*)

Ellfield. (*Still ſupporting Emilia*) Where will this end! Oh fate! fate!—in what various ways haſt thou ſtrewed my path of life with thorns! (*Emilia ſighs deeply and opens her eyes*) Her ſenſes ſeem returning—Madam!—(*Emilia fixes her eyes upon him, then thruſts him gently from her, and looks round the room with a vacant ſtare. By degrees, her recollection ſeems to return, when ſhe ſtrikes both hands upon her forehead, and burſts into tears. Ellfield again addreſſes her*) Recover yourſelf, Madam,—all will ſoon be well!—(*Emilia makes ſigns to him to be ſilent, ſhe claſps her hands together, ſinks upon her knees, and raiſes her eyes towards Heaven in ſilent prayer—Ellfield kneels by her*) Oh, God, to thee I addreſs my ſupplications!—ſave,—in mercy ſave,—our benefactreſs!

(*The Curtain falls.*)

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Room in which the Miniſter receives Company. Several Card-Tables ſet out, with Cards ſtrewn upon them, and Candles ſtanding, nearly burnt out. The Time is early in the Morning.* PRUNK *is buſied in collecting together the Cards and Card-Money.*

PRUNK.

TO the honour of the Spaniards, two inventions are to be abſcribed to them, the Inquiſition and Cards;—both powerful bulwarks, againſt hereſy and languor, and in many reſpects bearing a ſtrong reſemblance to each other. The Inquiſition prevents philoſophical inveſtigation,—ſo do Cards.—Cards occaſion pale cheeks and hollow eyes,—ſo does the Inquiſition.—The Inquiſition ſtifles all the natural affections,—ſo do Cards. The rage for Cards brings many a ſacrifice to the gallows,—the Inquiſition carries an equal number to the blazing pile.—But the influence of Cards is ſtill more extenſive than that of the Inquiſition—for the latter, only ſeizes upon Jews and Hereticks, whereas Cards do not ſpare any ſect or age, not even the moſt pious female devotees.—Peace to the aſhes of him who invented card-money!—may his bones be cut into dice, and his portrait be ſtamped on every king of diamonds!

SCENE

SCENE II.—*Enter* SCHARFENECK, *and* PILZ.

Prunk. Your honour's moſt obedient.—Why ſo late?—or whither ſo early?

Scharfeneck. Is my uncle riſen?

Prunk. He is ill with a head-ach.

Scharfeneck. Has he any company?

Prunk. Yes, the maſtiff.

Scharfeneck. I muſt ſpeak with him.

Prunk. I do not know whether———

Scharfeneck. Pilz, leave the papers here.

Pilz. Mr. Secretary Allbrand ordered me———

Scharfeneck. Allbrand ordered you!—What?—

Pilz. To carry them to his room.

Scharfeneck. There's no occaſion for that.

Pilz. He charged me, upon my conſcience———

Scharfeneck. Your conſcience! — a pretty kind of charge, truly.

Pilz. But, it ſeemed to be of great importance to the Secretary.

Scharfeneck. Enough Pilz,—I have my reaſons;—and that's more than I can always ſay.

Pilz. If your honour will take upon yourſelf, to be anſwerable— *(He lays the papers upon the table, bows, and Withdraws)*

SCENE III.—SCHARFENECK *and* PRUNK.

Scharfeneck. Prunk, I have ſtruck a grand ſtroke.

Prunk. Met with a girl?—

Scharfeneck. No, no,—rendered a ſervice to the State.

Prunk. To the State?—that means, in this country, to the Prince;—therefore, I repeat my queſtion?

Scharfeneck. Thou art a wiſe-one. No, Prunk, the ſervice is not quite ſo important; I have only caught a Jacobin.

Prunk. By name?—

Scharfeneck. Syndicus Morland.

Prunk. Morland, a Jacobin? — No, no, that won't do!—

Scharfeneck. Why do you doubt it?

Prunk. He looks every body in the face.

Scharfeneck. What can be more ſuſpicious? — He ſhews a want of diffidence, very unbecoming in a ſubject.

Prunk. And he always ſays what he thinks.

Scharfeneck. A ſign that he thinks too much.

Prunk. A new ſpecies of crime.

Scharfeneck. Far from it!—It has always been thought prudent to keep fools, and wiſe-men, coiners, and thinkers, in confinement.

Prunk. But, if you have no other proofs—

Scharfeneck. Theſe papers contain the proofs. Now, my uncle will no longer have reaſon to complain, that I do not apply to any thing. I have forſaken both the Card-Table and a *rendez-vous*—ſacrificed a whole night—

Prunk. To plunge a worthy man into diſtreſs.

Scharfeneck. An impertinent remark, Prunk.

Prunk. Truth always ſounds to Courtiers, like an ill-tuned violin.

SCENE IV. — *Enter* SMITH.

Smith. I have followed you cloſely, Sir.

Scharfeneck. *(To Prunk)* Is the Porter ill?

Smith. No, he ſnarled very properly at me,—but I know theſe people very well.

Scharfeneck. Probably, you had a great deal of converſation with each other?

Smith. I underſtand you.—His rank would have been no objection to me,—but his profeſſion——

Scharfeneck. Indeed!—had he then fortunately been a ſhoemaker?—

Smith. You are right—for then he had probably been an induſtrious and uſeful man. But a Porter, and a Gentleman of the Privy-chamber, are commonly good for nothing.

Scharfeneck.

Scharfeneck. Fellow, are you mad?

Smith. I have rather proved the contrary.

Scharfeneck. Prunk, lend me your brawny hands to chaſtiſe his impertinence.

Smith. Do not give yourſelves that trouble—I ſhall not ſtir from this place, till I have ſpoken with the Miniſter;—then—you will find me any where.

Scharfeneck. (*Somewhat embarraſſed*) Prunk!—

Prunk. No noiſe muſt be made here.

Scharfeneck. (*To Smith*) This to me, in my uncle's houſe!—

Smith. Young man, I pity you from my ſoul!—It is a great misfortune to you, that your uncle is Miniſter.

Scharfeneck. Your language——

Smith. Was once not unfamiliar to you.

Scharfeneck. Indeed—it appears to me—as if——

Smith. Can we have a little private converſation?

Scharfeneck. Prunk. (*He gives Prunk a nod, who retires*)

SCENE V.—SMITH *and* SCHARFENECK.

Scharfeneck. Now eccentric Sir?

Smith. To juſtify that appellation, I will begin with relating a ſtory. In the courſe of my rambles, I once came to a ſmall town, the romantic ſituation of which charmed me, and I remained for ſeveral weeks fixed to the ſpot. It was ſurrounded by a chain of hills, at whoſe foot meandered a beautiful ſtream; and theſe were my daily haunt. One evening, I had ſtayed out very late, and was wandering ſolitarily homewards, by twilight, along the water-ſide, when ſuddenly I ſaw and heard, among the trees, a female form, wringing her hands violently, and uttering deep ſighs and groans, as ſhe ſtaggered backwards, and forwards, to the brink of the river. Curioſity induced me to conceal myſelf, that I might obſerve her farther; and, in a few moments, I ſaw her plunge into the ſtream. I am a good ſwimmer; I ſprung in after her, and was fortunate enough to ſave her life;—yet ſhe did not thank me, for——What think you, young gentleman of the Privy-Chamber?—

what

what reaſon do you ſuppoſe ſhe gave for this attempt at ſelf-deſtruction?

Scharfeneck. *(Extremely confuſed)* How can I gueſs?

Smith You tremble?

Scharfeneck. Well, well, go on.

Smith. "I am," ſaid ſhe, "the daughter of an humble "citizen, and poſſeſſed no other wealth, but my honour and "innocence. Of theſe, a young man, a ſtudent here, "ſought to beguile me; but, failing in his attempt, he had "recourſe to a moſt cruel revenge.—He traduced my cha- "racter in all companies; till at length, wherever I went, "the neighbours pointed at me with their fingers; my "former friends looked aſkance at me; and, worſe than "all, my lover, an honeſt mechanic,—oh, terrible to think "on! deſerted me. I could not ſupport myſelf againſt ſuch "undeſerved ignominy, I was driven to deſpair, and I re- "ſolved to put an end to my life."—You do not ſeem well, Sir?

Scharfeneck. *(With down-caſt eyes, and twirling his fingers)* Sir?—

Smith. At firſt, I ſuppoſed the ſlanderer to be wholly worthleſs;—but I was miſtaken—he was only thoughtleſs. I went to him with the firmneſs of an honeſt man, painted to him, in forcible colours, the poor girl's miſery, and the diſaſtrous conſequences of his chattering vanity;—he was ſhocked at the ſtory; I ſaw tears of remorſe ruſh into his eyes, the bluſh of ſhame ſuffuſe his cheeks.

Scharfeneck. *(Stretching out his arms)* Edward Smith!

Smith. He had ſufficient magnanimity inſtantly to recant his former errors, and to proclaim aloud the maiden's innocence, and his own criminality. Repentance and aſſiduous kindneſs waſhed out the ſtains that calumny had made; and on my boſom he thanked Heaven, that I had ſaved him, before it was too late to repair his fault.

Scharfeneck. *(Throwing himſelf upon his neck)* Edward Smith!

Smith. You now recollect my name.

Scharfeneck. With ſhame, that I could forget your perſon. Edward, we then exchanged promiſes of perpetual friendſhip.

Smith. Which you are not now aſhamed to own?

Scharfeneck. Do not ſuppoſe me ſunk quite ſo low!

Smith. I am only Morland's clerk.

Scharfeneck. I am only a man.

Smith.

Smith. (*Shaking his hand warmly*) Right!—and like that unfortunate girl, you have plunged into a ruſhing ſtream, whence I may perhaps equally ſucceed in reſcuing you. Young man, that dreadful example ought to have ſerved you as a warning;—under its influence you made me a ſolemn promiſe to ſubdue your fatal propenſity to calumny; but aſk your heart how faithfully that promiſe has been kept. Though all who have become ſacrifices to your tongue, may not have made like attempts upon their own lives, yet who can tell how many a bitter tear has been ſhed in ſecret, of which you only were the cauſe—how much domeſtic happineſs may have been deſtroyed by one word alone, perhaps careleſsly uttered by you. The ears of mankind are always open for the reception of ſlander, but are too often inflexibly cloſed againſt all attempts at its refutation;—a hint is eaſily given, but its effects cannot eaſily be calculated:—a thoughtleſs word trips lightly over the tongue; but it cannot be recalled by the Almighty himſelf.

Scharfeneck. You have a right to reproach me thus; yet at preſent I do not deſerve——

Smith. What had Morland done to thee?

Scharfeneck. He was conſidered as dangerous.

Smith. Calumny!

Scharfeneck. He eſpouſed the citizens' cauſe with great warmth.

Smith. It was his duty.

Scharfeneck. He is a thorn in the eyes of ſome perſons.

Smith. There is the thing.—Allbrand—

Scharfeneck. Even ſo!

Smith. And can you ſuffer yourſelf to be made the tool of ſuch a man?

Scharfeneck. I conſider myſelf, as performing my duty to my uncle.

Smith. Young man, your head and heart received from nature a proper bias. Rouſe yourſelf then, from this unworthy intoxication,—let an Allbrand cringe as he pleaſes; but do not ſuffer yourſelf to be infected with the poiſon.—You might be ſplendid by virtue; and you only glitter by rank.—You might enlighten from merit, and you only dazzle with wit. Your heart would gain you friends, but they are repulſed by your head:—you might

might attract love, and you only coquet with fear. To ſlander a worthy man, who is peaceably following his own purſuits, is no leſs baſe, than to murder one who ſleeps; and to re-eſtabliſh the character of the undeſerved victim of calumny, is a taſk ſcarcely leſs difficult, than to ſmooth over ſcars of the ſmall-pox.

Scharfeneck. Here is my hand,—never will I give you cauſe of complaint, in future.

Smith. As an earneſt of your ſincerity, ſave Morland.

Scharfeneck. I give you my honour, that whatever is in my power, ſhall be done.

Smith. Where are his papers?

Scharfeneck. Upon this table.

Smith. Will you deliver them into your uncle's hands?

Scharfeneck. No!

Smith. What will you ſay to him?

Scharfeneck. That they are loſt—burnt—

SCENE VI.—*Enter the* MINISTER *from his chamber.*

Miniſter. (*Calls*) Prunk!

Prunk. (*Entering from the anti-chamber*) Your Excellency.

Smith. (*Aſide to Scharfeneck*) Now is your time.

Miniſter. What a noiſe has there been here this morning;—'tis a ſhameful breach of decorum.

Prunk. This ſtranger——

Miniſter. What does he want?

Smith. I beg your Excellency's pardon for coming ſo late.

Miniſter. (*Looking at his watch, and ſmiling*) So late?

Smith. Too late for one in whoſe houſe juſtice never ſlumbers;—too late when the queſtion is to vindicate an innocent man whom calumny has unjuſtly thrown into priſon.

Miniſter. Who are you?

Smith. One who will eſteem himſelf moſt happy, moſt worthy of envy, ſhould he ſucceed in reſcuing innocence

from undeſerved odium,—and in ſaving your Excellency's fame from incurring the ſtain of injuſtice.

Miniſter. (*Contemptuouſly*) You!

Smith. So looked the ſnared lion upon the mouſe, till ſhe had gnawed the net in pieces.

Miniſter. In whoſe behalf do you ſpeak?

Smith. In behalf of the worthieſt man in the town—Syndicus Morland.

Miniſter. Ha!—where is he?

Smith. In a place of all others leaſt proper for him—in priſon.

Miniſter. And where was the bird caught?

Scharfeneck. (*Confuſed*) Secretary Allbrand will inform you.

Smith. Relate all that you know; but let truth alone guide the narrative;—before her, my friend will never bluſh, nor I grow mute.

Miniſter. The truth, young Sir!

Scharfeneck. Mr. Morland ſtole at midnight—

Smith. 'Tis falſe, he never ſtole.

Miniſter. No interruption, Sir.

Scharfeneck. The Syndicus was going at midnight, to viſit one Captain Ellfield, who lives in the Caſtle ſquare—

Smith. Impoſſible!—he does not know any body of that name.

Miniſter. Yes, the Captain is well known both to the Syndicus and to ourſelves.—But, proceed.

Scharfeneck. When, juſt as he entered the houſe, he was arreſted.

Smith. At whoſe command?

Miniſter. At mine.

Scharfeneck. Secretary Allbrand immediately diſpatched me to ſeize his papers.

Miniſter. And where are they?

Scharfeneck. By an unlucky accident—(*He ſtops, extremely embarraſſed*)

Miniſter. Well?—

Smith. Here they lie!—the property of a citizen, under the protection of the firſt officer of the State.

Miniſter. They muſt be examined.

Smith. By what authority?

Miniſter. (*Starting indignantly*) Sir!

Smith. Juſtice would not ſhrink from the queſtion, and he who ſtands in the Prince's place, ought not to be offended at it.

Miniſter. Once more, who are you?

Smith. An Engliſhman, and at preſent clerk to Mr. Morland.

Miniſter. Eſteem for your nation, could alone induce me to pardon ſuch boldneſs.

Smith. Speak pardon to the criminal!—undiſguiſed truth may not ſuit the maſs of mankind; but from the noble-minded Miniſter of Juſtice, it will be received with tranſport.

Miniſter. The man in whoſe behalf you ſpeak with ſuch true Engliſh licence, lies under ſtrong ſuſpicion of holding dangerous principles.

Smith. By whom is he accuſed?

SCENE VII.—*Enter* ALLBRAND.

Miniſter. 'Tis well that you are come—your prudence keeps you watchful—now complete your work, unmaſk a ſuſpicious character, and juſtify meaſures which appear deſpotic in the eyes of this Engliſhman.

Smith. This man, his accuſer!—My Lord Count, before one word ſhall paſs thoſe impure lips, I entreat you to hear me!—Secretary Allbrand was a daily gueſt at Morland's, and was conſidered as his boſom friend. He has ſhared thoſe moments when wine increaſes the circulation of the blood, and when an ardent feeling will often burſt out in unguarded words. He was always courteous, always pliant, had always a complacent nod of the head ready for every opinion which was thrown out,—a ſmile at command for every ſally of wit. Poſſeſſing in an eminent degree the faculty of drawing forth whatever he wiſhed to know, he has availed himſelf of the unreſerved moments of ſocial mirth, to ruin the man he pretended to love,—he has watched every turn of the converſation at table, and dipping his pen in gall, noted down any innocent piece of humour uttered by his honeſt hoſt, to make uſe of it as opportunity ſhould offer for trampling him under foot, and ingratiating himſelf with the court. Count Scharfeneck ſurely will not liſten to ſuch an accuſer.—When a man of honour is called to account, a man of honour alone ſhould be heard againſt him.

Miniſter. (*To Allbrand*) You ſtir not hence, till you have proved all your accuſations.

Allbrand. Am I to gueſs at the queſtion before you?

Smith. Oh, the innocent heſitation! *Miniſter.*

Miniſter. Morland is arreſted.

Allbrand. Of that I came to inform your Excellency.

Miniſter. Declare before this gentleman, why he is arreſted.

Allbrand. For arrogant aſſumptions, indiſcreet converſation, and ſuſpicious intercourſe.

Smith. And where are your proofs?

Allbrand. With reſpect to his arrogance, I need only remind your Excellency of the manner in which he has defended the rights of the citizens, as he is pleaſed to term them.

Smith. A man who would perform his duty, muſt ſpeak with firmneſs.

Allbrand. Of his indiſcreet converſation, your Excellency's nephew, the Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, has often been witneſs.

Smith. (*To Scharfeneck*) Is this true?

Scharfeneck. (*With firmneſs*) No.

Miniſter. How, nephew,—have you not yourſelf——

Scharfeneck. Yes, uncle, I confeſs it with ſhame;—but God be my witneſs, I was then a ſlanderer; nor reflected upon the conſequences!—Thoughtleſſneſs and bad example miſled me; but the happineſs of a worthy man is concerned, and I am recalled to myſelf. Morland's houſe is a ſchool of morals, his table the rendezvous of innocent cheerfulneſs;—his jokes never wound,—his ſerious converſation is full of inſtruction, and no captious expreſſion ever eſcapes his lips. Love for the town he inhabits, affection for the Prince, and reſpect for my uncle, reign in his boſom. As ſuch I know him; and whoever repreſents him otherwiſe, were it my uncle himſelf, I would ſay that he miſrepreſents him and deſerves correction.

Smith. Worthily ſpoken, young man!—can any thing more be wanting to eſtabliſh Mr. Morland's innocence, than this unſuſpicious teſtimony?—Oh Count, let your ears be cloſed againſt the voice of calumny!—the ſlanderer is the moſt dangerous of all traitors to the State, for he unites all crimes in one. He is a thief who ſteals into mens' houſes, and robs them of more precious treaſures than gold and ſilver,—he is a murderer who attacks the inoffenſive and unarmed, and deprives them of even more than life. Reſtore to the State a citizen, to whom his duty was ever ſacred, and who has too dearly atoned for his only weakneſs,—placing confidence in this man.

Allbrand. The true declamation of an aſſociate in his crimes.

Smith. Baſe ſoul!—is that thy laſt reſource?

Allbrand. Juſtice remains cool!—It is fortunate for me, that my patriotic zeal is fully known to his Excellency.

Miniſter. Why this altercation?—Morland's papers will elucidate the whole affair.

Allbrand. They are in my apartment, and ſhall be laid before your Excellency this very day.

Miniſter. They are here; they may be examined inſtantly.

Allbrand. (*Starting, and appearing extremely confounded*) How!—What!—I ordered——

Smith. Once more, my Lord Count, let me entreat your forbearance towards theſe papers!—I am unacquainted with their contents; I never was in Morland's confidence; yet I would venture to pledge my life that they contain nothing improper. But Mr. Morland is a philoſopher and a poet; and in the courſe of philoſophical inveſtigation, or in the compoſition of poetry, things are often haſtily written, which were never intended for any other eye than the writer's. A random line may condemn a man, only for want of being conſidered in connection with the context;—the writing-deſk is a friend to whom we confide every effuſion of the heart, or imagination;—has any one a right to put this friend to the rack?—or if he poſſeſſed it, would he avail himſelf of the right?

Miniſter. Theſe obſervations may be juſt; but they only encreaſe my curioſity.

Smith. Curioſity is a feeling that a Judge muſt ſuppreſs.

Allbrand. There is ſuch a variety of other buſineſs awaiting your Excellency this morning, that I had better previouſly examine the papers in my own apartment.

Miniſter. They ſhall remain here.

Allbrand. Indeed, that gentleman is perfectly in the right. Many things may have eſcaped the pen of a philoſopher and poet, never intended to ſee day-light. I would ſelect only ſuch papers as can in any way intereſt the State; and thus ſave your Excellency much trouble and many precious moments.

Miniſter. This, when you believe——

Smith. I beg your Excellency's pardon, but I muſt now recal my former requeſt, and entreat no leſs earneſtly, that the papers may be opened. The Secretary is embarraſſed,

—he

—he ſeeks to prevent it;—this cannot be without *good* reaſons.—*Good* reaſons, my Lord Count—*good* you know is a relative term.

Allbrand. Sir, you are abuſive—I know you not; I have never offended you; but I will not forget who I am. I refer myſelf to his Excellency for ſatisfaction;—for my own part, I find that I had better retire; ſince not even the preſence of the firſt Miniſter can ſecure me againſt affronts. (*He ſnatches up the papers haſtily, and is going*)

Smith. (*Stepping before the door*) Hold!—you ſtir not hence!

Miniſter. Mr. Clerk, your impertinence exceeds even my patience.—Prunk, call the Guards. (*Exit Prunk*)

Smith. (*Taking out his pocket-book*) My Lord Count, it is with reluctance, that I am obliged to avail myſelf of a letter of recommendation, which I have reſerved only for a caſe of extreme exigence. (*He gives the Miniſter a letter*)

Miniſter. (*Contemptuouſly*) *You*, a letter of recommendation to *me?*

Smith. I beg you to break it open.

Miniſter. (*Opens the letter, looks at the ſignature, ſtarts, and exclaims*) WILLIAM PITT!!! (*He reads the letter to himſelf, aſtoniſhment and confuſion appear alternately in his countenance,—when he has finiſhed, he turns, with great courteſy, to Smith*) My Lord——I——if I do not immediately——if I do not underſtand——Prunk, a chair.—My Lord, ſo earneſt a recommendation was wholly ſuperfluous for a man who has diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo nobly.—Prunk, why don't you bring a chair!

Smith. Your Excellency will excuſe me, if I defer to a future opportunity, acquainting you with the motives which occaſioned my appearing thus *incognito.*

Miniſter. No one has any right to queſtion your Lordſhip upon that ſubject.

Smith. National humour may perhaps be offered as the principal cauſe.

Miniſter. (*Preſenting his Nephew with great ſolemnity*) My Lord, the Gentleman of the Privy-Chamber, Von Scharfeneck.—Nephew, my Lord Sidney.

Smith. (*Giving his hand to Scharfeneck, with a ſmile*) We are already known to each other.

Prunk. (*Entering*) Pleaſe your Excellency, the Guards are ready in the Anti-chamber.

Miniſter. Silence!—My Lord, I hope you will give his Highneſs the pleaſure——

(*Allbrand*

(Allbrand, during this ſcene, has been watching for an opportunity to eſcape; but Smith, who has ſtill kept his eye fixed upon him, ſeeing him attempt to ſlide to the door, ſeizes him ſomewhat roughly by the arm)

Smith. This gentleman appears ſo extremely anxious to eſcape with theſe papers, that I muſt once more requeſt they may be opened in my preſence.

Miniſter. They ſhall be examined inſtantly. Yet let me aſſure your Lordſhip, that you have miſtaken my Secretary, of whoſe fidelity and activity I have the moſt convincing proofs.

Smith. Then I pity the honourable man, that nature has beſtowed on him a countenance, which ſeems deſtined to the gallows.

Miniſter. Come, Allbrand, unſeal the papers!—Why this heſitation?

Allbrand. I obey. His Lordſhip muſt himſelf acknowledge the truth of what is alleged; provided nothing be ſuppreſſed which may tend to inculpate the accuſed.

Smith. His Excellency has forbidden any preface.

(The Miniſter, Smith, and Allbrand, range themſelves round the table, the papers are unſealed, and the Miniſter examines them)

Miniſter. Accounts ſettled.—Quittances.—Letters.—*(He opens one of the Letters)* From his Father in Switzerland.—Philoſophical reflections upon the immortality of the ſoul.—Letters and verſes to my wife.—Secret benefactions,—"In caſe of my death, my wife is requeſted to continue this liſt exactly as they are here noted down."—Ode to Spring.—Sketch of a Poem for the children of Count von Scharfeneck, for their father's birth-day.

Prunk. Their young Excellencies lately begged that of him very earneſtly. Your Excellency's birth-day happens in the courſe of next week.

Miniſter. Indeed!—Ah, I have made an ill return for this!—*(He proceeds in his examination)* Drawings—A Song, with Muſic—Actions which appear to be well grounded—Deductions——

Smith. (Haſtily to Allbrand) What are you hiding there?

Allbrand. (Looking extremely confuſed) Nothing.

Smith. Produce it.

Miniſter. Inſtantly. *(Allbrand lays the paper upon the table, with a trembling hand, the Miniſter takes it up, and reads)* "PATRIOTIC REFLECTIONS THROWN TOGE-

"THER, AT THE REQUEST OF MY FRIEND ALL-"BRAND."——How!—I hope this is not! — (*He runs over the paper haſtily*) It is ſo indeed, — the very work *verbatim et literatim*.—Mr. Secretary, this is the treatiſe which firſt recommended you to my favour, the foundation of all your fortune.

Allbrand. I beg your Excellency's pardon—

Miniſter. Oh, ſhame! ſhame!—You have preſſed all the juice of the ripened fruit, and now would trample the rind into the duſt—Miſguided wretch that I have been!—But Morland's innocence is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed; haſten, Nephew, to releaſe him from his ſhameful bondage. Order that my carriage be made ready; it ſhall follow you, and bring you and the Syndicus hither from the priſon. I owe a public atonement to the worthy man; and it ſhall be made in the preſence of you all.

Scharfeneck. I haſten to execute the moſt glorious commiſſion with which I was ever entruſted. (*Exit*)

Allbrand. I ſee the whole extent of my misfortune.—Morland's enlargement includes with it my condemnation. Heaven grant that your Excellency may not have proceeded raſhly!—I acknowledge that I was indebted to the Syndicus for this treatiſe; but with my principles, I could not ſuffer a private obligation to interfere with my prior duty to my country. I rejoice that nothing ſuſpicious has been found in thoſe papers; yet the falſhood of the charges brought againſt the accuſed, is by no means proved. Your Excellency will recollect, that a very important circumſtance yet remains uninveſtigated,—the ſecret intercourſe that has long ſubſiſted between Mr. Morland and Captain Ellfield—his ſtolen viſits at midnight——

Smith. Is not the ſerpent's venom yet exhauſted?

A female voice without, in a tone of great anxiety. I muſt ſpeak with him!

A Servant without. His Excellency cannot ſpare time.

The female voice, approaching the door. I will go in.

The Servant. Go back!—go back!

Miniſter. (*To Prunk*) See what is the matter.

Prunk. (*Opening the door*) Some ſtrange lady—

SCENE VIII.—MRS. ELLFIELD *ruſhes in wildly. Her countenance is pale and ghaſtly—ſhe ſtaggers, and looks eagerly round on all preſent.*

Mrs. Ellfield. Which is the Miniſter?

Miniſter. I am he, Madam.—Whom do I behold?

Mrs. Ellfield. The wife of Captain Ellfield.

Miniſter. Come hither, I imagine, to ſupport your huſband's petition for a penſion.

Mrs. Ellfield. No, my Lord, want would never have induced me to enter the Chamber of a Prime Miniſter;—I was born in the great world, and well know what kind of reception a beggar meets with about a Court. *(She ſupports herſelf againſt the back of a chair)*

Smith. *(Reaching her a ſeat)* You ſeem ill, Madam,—ſit down.

Mrs. Ellfield. I thank you, Sir. Yet you remind me of my illneſs at an unſeaſonable moment. *(She ſees Allbrand)* Ha! Villain! — you here!—

Miniſter. What mean you by that, Madam?

Smith. Oh, welcome auxiliary!

Allbrand. I have not the honour of knowing the lady, who accoſts me ſo familiarly.

Miniſter. Explain yourſelf, Madam?

Mrs. Ellfield. I will, my Lord;—yet not to waſte the little ſtrength poſſeſſed by one ſcarcely reſtored to life, upon a villain, but to ſave the guiltleſs, to vindicate the aſperſed character of an angel.—How my huſband fought for his native country; how he was crippled in her ſervice; and what recompenſe his valour has received, you already know.—The long and painful confinement he underwent, in recovering from his wounds, exhauſted at once our ſlender means, and my health; and ſcarcely was he able to riſe from the bed of ſickneſs, when I was ſeized with a dreadful fever. The delirium attendant upon my diſorder, deprived me for two months, of all ſenſe of our ſorrows; and I had ſunk unknown, unnoticed, into the grave, had not an accident conducted a lady, a total ſtranger to us, into our garret. To her benevolence alone, am I indebted for my recovery; ſhe attended me with the affection of a ſiſter; her purſe, her heart, were ours; yet ſhe kept her name in concealment; nor knew we till yeſterday, when a villainous accident revealed it to us, *(caſting a pointed look at Allbrand)* that Mrs. Morland was our benefactreſs.

Smith. Excellent woman!

Mrs. Ellfield. She came to us, only by night; and at the approach of morning, returned again! nor was any one, even in her own houſe, acquainted with her benevolence.

Smith. No one, Madam?

Mrs. Ellfield. Alas, no!—not even her huſband; and by this means villainy has ſucceeded, in transforming a benignant

nant angel, into a dæmon of darkneſs. This man,—oh to what humiliation does not poverty ſubject human nature! —came to us, and with inſidious promiſes and perſuaſions, endeavoured to purchaſe our aſſiſtance to his baſe deſigns upon her virtue.—We ſpurned his propoſals with indignation; but he is no half villain; and laſt night, as ſhe was adminiſtering her uſual conſolation to our ſufferings, he again entered our lodging, and ſolicited a private interview with our gueſt, on pretence of ſome important buſineſs that concerned her huſband. This, after ſome heſitation, ſhe granted. I know not the whole of what paſſed between them; but a probable conjecture may be formed from this letter, which had dropped from the hands of the unfortunate woman, as ſhe fell ſenſeleſs upon the floor.

Smith. *(Takes the letter and reads)* 'From the State 'priſon.—Diſſembling woman! enjoy thy triumph!— 'thou art free! thou may'ſt now, without reſtraint, revel 'in the Prince's arms!—laugh at me, if you pleaſe; I 'know, myſelf, that my rage is impotent. I know that 'I cannot interrupt thy voluptuous hours. I am here in 'chains, and powerleſs to revenge my wrongs!—yes, in 'chains through thee!—ſuch is the reward of my faith-'ful love!—Yet, hope not that I can be blinded by the 'flimſy pretence, on which I am impriſoned—I know well 'the true reaſon of my being here—with my own eyes I 'beheld you ſteal into the houſe of wantonneſs, thanks to 'the faithful friend who enabled me to detect your falſ-'hood!—I am fully ſenſible, that on earth I cannot hope for 'redreſs, that you will ſecure my perpetual detention in 'this confinement, while you diſhonour my name with im-'punity—yet tremble at the vengeance that awaits you, 'when the righteous God ſhall have freed me by death 'from theſe ignominious chains, and have ſummoned you 'from the arms of voluptuouſneſs into the cold boſom of 'the grave! 'MORLAND.'

(Smith having read the letter, ſeizes Allbrand eagerly) Ha! fiend!—this is thy work!—confeſs it!—Oh, what daggers doſt thou not plunge into the hearts of the unfortunate!

Allbrand. Sir, you forget yourſelf!—of what concern can Morland's domeſtic quarrels be to me?—it is well known, that his wife was formerly in a certain predicament with the Prince—this he has perhaps now firſt diſcovered —perhaps he ſuppoſes that the connection ſtill continues—

for my part, I neither do, nor will, know any thing of the matter.

Mrs. Ellfield. He himſelf ſought to obtain her favours —and would have influenced our poverty to promote his ſuit. A penſion for my huſband was the promiſed reward of our infamy; but failing in his attempt, his mean ſoul was reſolved on vengeance.

Miniſter. I am aſtoniſhed paſt expreſſion, at all that I ſee and hear!—Tell me, ſincerely, Madam,—has Morland ever had any intercourſe with your huſband?

Mrs. Ellfield. He never even ſaw him.

Miniſter. How is this?—My Secretary informed me, that ſuſpicious meetings were held at your houſe, in which Morland was principally concerned.

Allbrand. I may have been deceived by my informer.

Mrs. Ellfield. Suſpicious meetings at our houſe!—Oh, my Lord! my huſband's limbs indeed are crippled, but his heart is ſound.

Miniſter. I have been impoſed upon, moſt ſhamefully! —What a man have I taken into my confidence!

Smith. My part is over; your's is now to come, my Lord Count.

Miniſter. Prunk, are the guards ſtill in the anti-chamber?

Prunk. They are, my Lord.

Miniſter. Conſign the villain into their cuſtody.

Allbrand. I have ſo firm a reliance upon your Excellency's juſtice, that I do not fear being condemned without ſufficient proof of guilt. Nothing has hitherto appeared againſt me but empty words—I have only been talked down; yet I doubt not of my innocence triumphing at laſt over ſuch malice. (*Exit with Prunk*)

Smith. Hypocrite to the end!

Mrs. Ellfield. May I requeſt permiſſion of your Excellency to haſten inſtantly, and inform Mr. Morland, whoſe freedom you have pronounced as a citizen, of what alone can render his enlargement acceptable,—the innocence of his beloved wife?

Smith. You are right, Madam; and allow me to be your companion; my arm ſhall ſupport you.

Mrs. Ellfield. Joy will be my ſufficient ſupport.

SCENE

SCENE IX.—*As they are going, the door is opened, and* EMILIA *ruſhes in, followed by* CAPTAIN ELLFIELD.

Emilia. (*Throwing herſelf at the Miniſter's feet*) Juſtice, oh Count!—juſtice for my guiltleſs huſband!—compaſſion for his diſconſolate wife!

Miniſter. Riſe, Madam! (*Reaches her a chair*) Recover yourſelf!

Emilia. Firſt pronounce Morland's acquittal!—Oh! this miſery is inſupportable!—Awakened from a ſwoon, I learnt that a noble minded woman was gone to procure my huſband's enlargement—but ſhe did not return—my impatience could not be reſtrained—anguiſh lent me wings, and I flew hither!—Oh! I can no more!

Miniſter. Be compoſed, Madam. Mr. Morland's acquittal is already prononounced—we expect him here, every moment—I am convinced both of his and your innocence.

Emilia. My huſband at liberty!—my honour vindicated!—Great God!—(*She takes the Miniſter's hand, and preſſes it ſilently to her heart*)

Prunk. (*Entering*) Your Excellency's carriage is returned.

Miniſter. With my welcome gueſt.—Haſten to conduct him in. (*To Emilia*) It is Mr. Morland, Madam.

SCENE X.—*Enter* SCHARFENECK, MORLAND, *and* JENNY.

Emilia. Morland! (*She ruſhes into his arms, he turns away, ſhe ſinks almoſt fainting into the arms of Smith and Jenny.*)

Morland. (*Looking at her with conſtrained coldneſs and contempt*) Why am I brought hither?

Mrs. Ellfield. Unfortunate, miſguided man!—Oh caſt from thee the poiſon of unjuſt ſuſpicion—thy Emilia is innocent—liſten to me.

Morland. Who are you, Madam?—I know you not!—by what means can you be concerned in our fate.

Mrs. Ellfield. I owe my life to Mrs. Morland.

Morland. Still I do not underſtand you, ſpeak more plainly.

Mrs. Ellfield. I lay upon my death-bed, ſhe viſited me, adminiſtered to my wants, ſacrificed whole nights to me—

Morland.

Morland. Whole nights!—Oh repeat that again!

Mrs. Ellfield. Yes, whole nights.—Believe me your ſuſpicions have fallen upon a benevolent angel.

Morland. But it was to meet the Prince?

Mrs. Ellfield. He never entered our garret.

Morland. Yet I ſaw a man receive Emilia at your door.

Mrs. Ellfield. It was my huſband.

Morland. But my impriſonment?—

Miniſter. Was the work of villainy.

Morland. I know it was, of Emilia's villainy.

Miniſter. No, of my Secretary's—of Allbrand's.

Morland. Of Allbrand's!—of my boſom friend's—impoſſible!

Mrs. Ellfield. Moſt true!—he loved your wife.

Morland. Oh horrible!—but how know you that?

Mrs. Ellfield. Would that I were not compelled to repeat it once more!—he would have purchaſed our aſſiſtance to his baſe deſigns.

Morland. And this Emilia concealed from me?

Smith. Through an unfortunate forbearance.

Jenny. Have I not already repeatedly aſſured you of that?

Morland. And was this his motive for perſuading me to eſcape?

Smith. Moſt aſſuredly!—he wiſhed at any rate to get the huſband out of the way.

Morland. For this did he perſuade me to write her ſuch a letter?

Mrs. Ellfield. A letter that deprived her of her ſenſes.

Miniſter. We have all been deceived by a villain who now expiates his crimes in a dungeon.

Morland. Great God! what have I done! *(He throws himſelf at Emilia's feet)* Pardon injured innocence!

Emilia. *(Bending over him)* Yes, I am indeed innocent.

Morland. *(Riſing and claſping her in his arms)* My wife! my wife! *(Emilia hides her face in his boſom—a long pauſe)*

Jenny. *(Giving her hand to Smith)* Edward, I am your's

(The Curtain falls.)

END OF THE PLAY.

BRITISH MUSEUM